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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4518th meeting

Wednesday, 24 April 2002, 10.40 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Rivas
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Gokool
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Singapore	Mr. Yap
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2002/436).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2002/436)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Spain, Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Nebojša Čović, Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia and President of the Coordination Centre of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Čović (Yugoslavia) took a seat at the Council table and Mr. Arias (Spain) and Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the course of the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Michael Steiner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Steiner to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Michael Steiner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

I now give the floor to Mr. Steiner.

Mr. Steiner: I am pleased to tell you that the United Nations operation in Kosovo under resolution 1244 (1999) has entered a new phase, allowing us to make new proposals for the way ahead.

In the period beginning June 1999, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) concentrated on the humanitarian crisis, on essential services and on stopping open hostilities, with KFOR's support. Indeed, the Kosovo where my predecessors arrived — and with great joy I see Bernard Kouchner here in the Council Chamber — looked very different from the Kosovo of today.

What has been achieved? You have seen the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General. His support has been invaluable to our work.

With respect to government, the Kosovo-wide elections in November were universally recognized as free and fair. The Assembly, the President and the multi-ethnic Government of Kosovo are now in place and working. We are building an inclusive public service. We have set aside more than 20 per cent of posts for non-majority communities and 18 per cent for Kosovo Serbs.

We have a functioning police and justice system. The crime rate has gone down steadily. There were 500 murders during the second half of 1999, 250 in 2000 and 136 last year. Since January 2002, there have been 16 murders. If this trend continues, we can expect fewer than 100 murders this year.

The economy is slowly beginning to function. More than 95 per cent of the 2002 Kosovo consolidated budget of 374 million euros is now funded with local taxes and revenues. Starting this month, people are paying income taxes. More than 50,000 businesses have been registered. There has been a four-fold increase in the rate of electricity production since 1999.

With respect to public services, social infrastructure has been rebuilt from scratch. We have more than 1,100 schools with a total of 450,000 pupils. Five regional hospitals have been refurbished and equipped. There are 360 functioning health-care facilities throughout Kosovo. As of July 2002, 130,000 pensioners will start receiving pensions.

Now we have the provisional institutions of self-government. What has changed? Until now, the Mission had a general view of where it was headed, but we did not see how it would get there. Now we can see more clearly how to structure the path. The road is not endless. We have a vision of how to finish our job.

We need to look both inside and outside. We need to transfer authority within Kosovo to the Provisional Government. We also need to convince the Kosovans to look beyond Kosovo to Belgrade and to the region.

What are our priorities? The first is reliable institutions. We now have Kosovan partners that we can work with: President Rugova, Prime Minister Rexhepi and Assembly President Daci. We need to consolidate the provisional institutions to ensure that they are effective, representative and transparent. We will make a particular effort to ensure their multi-ethnic character at all levels. The Kosovo Serbs have agreed to my proposal for their participation in the Government. They will nominate a Minister for Agriculture, as well as an Inter-Ministerial Coordinator on Returns. This is significant progress. On the local level, the municipal elections run by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) this autumn will be key. There are good reasons why the Kosovo Serbs, especially, want these elections this year.

Our second priority is to boost the economy. An unemployment rate of 50 per cent is an untenable situation. At the same time, UNMIK is downsizing. There has already been a substantial drop in donor money, and Kosovo is unable to borrow on the international markets. Getting the economic fundamentals right is therefore even more important. A key element is privatization. Privatization will not solve the problem in the short term, but it is the only basis for secure jobs in the long term. The legislation to create the Kosovo Trust Agency, which will be the vehicle for privatization, is now with the Provisional Government for comments.

The third priority is the rule of law. Effective police and judiciary are essential. We will gradually transfer policing responsibilities to the multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Force under UNMIK supervision. Let me pay tribute here to the brave policemen and women of UNMIK. The Polish Special Police recently demonstrated their dedication in an exemplary manner. We are also enhancing capabilities to effectively combat organized crime, terrorism and corruption. However, I must emphasise that as we begin to make significant arrests against the criminal gangs, we should anticipate a criminal backlash. KFOR Commander General Marcel Valentin and I stand shoulder to shoulder on maintaining order. We must count on the Council's support, especially when the going gets tough.

The final priority is returns. Now that the Kosovo Serbs will be part of the Government, we can focus more efficiently on an integrated effort to facilitate return. The years 2002 and 2003 will be decisive. We are committed to creating the preconditions for a substantial return process. Damage assessments in over 80 minority villages and urban areas have been completed. Serb returns to 14 villages and non-Serb minority returns to seven locations should commence within the next three months. The Kosovo Serbs will have their official representatives working on returns within the Government and in my office.

It is time to work on a real breakthrough in returns. But for this, I must ask for your help. When the returns start, on the basis of our integrated approach, we need to be sure that there will be money to follow the returnees. Only this way can we achieve sustainable returns.

Here I would like to make a more general point that relates to the previous one. We need to follow a dual-track approach. Multi-ethnicity and integration are the two mutually reinforcing elements here. On the one hand, the Kosovo Albanians, as the majority community, have to practice what their leaders preach — thank God. Multi-ethnicity means doing everything they can to encourage the smaller communities to stay in Kosovo and to make returns possible. On the other hand, the smaller communities have to participate in the institutions that we have set up under resolution 1244 (1999). They must integrate and abandon parallel structures. The rule of law must apply everywhere in Kosovo. This is also true for Mitrovica.

There will be no multi-ethnicity without integration, and there will also be no integration without multi-ethnicity.

Integration within Kosovo needs to be complemented by the strengthening of relations with Belgrade as well as of cooperation within the region. Just as Kosovo is a factor influencing stability within the region, relations with regional neighbours influence stability in Kosovo. I have already made my first trips to Belgrade, as well as to Skopje, Tirana and Sarajevo. We will continue to foster regional dialogue at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. Belgrade will be the crucial partner.

Finally, I turn to the question of benchmarks. I have described the priorities of my mission. The work of implementing resolution 1244 (1999) is now a joint effort with the provisional institutions.

We are transferring our responsibilities to those institutions in the process of building substantial autonomy. This will bring us closer to a stage at which it will be time to begin the political process designed to determine Kosovo's future status. This will be one of my main responsibilities, as foreseen in paragraph 11 (e) of resolution 1244 (1999).

But let me say clearly that the time for this has not yet come. Kosovo society and institutions will have to show that they are ready for this process — without prejudging its outcome. We must make clear what is expected from them. Therefore, I am embarking on a benchmarks process. These benchmarks should be achieved before launching a discussion on status, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

The benchmarks are: existence of effective, representative and functioning institutions; enforcement of the rule of law; freedom of movement for all; respect for the right of all Kosovans to remain and return: development of a sound basis for a market economy; clarity of property title; normalized dialogue with Belgrade; and reduction and transformation of the Kosovo Protection Corps in line with its mandate.

With your permission, Mr. President, following my statement Council members will receive a brief illustration of our thinking on benchmarks.

These benchmarks articulate our expectations of Kosovo's leaders and of the wider public. They mirror the principles and priorities in the coalition agreement signed on 28 February by political parties forming the Government. Through stimulating public debate, we can also gain broad support for needed reforms.

Attaining these benchmarks is an objective in itself. Kosovo can advance towards a fair and just society only when these minimum preconditions are met and when the changes in institutions are sustainable even without an international presence.

I offer this to the Council as an exit strategy which is, in reality, an "entry strategy" into the European integration process. The benchmarks complement the preconditions that Kosovo needs to meet to qualify for the stabilization and association process.

I rely on the support of the Security Council for this strategy. But in addition to political support, I will still need its sustained technical and financial support. This is essential in achieving our priorities. Yes, we will have to reduce our engagement, but not at a time when we should be capitalizing on our past work. I am concerned about the anticipated premature reduction in the Kosovo peacekeeping budget. Given the marathon that we have run in Kosovo since 1999, it would be tragic to falter as we are nearing the finish line.

The next stages of authority transfer will succeed only with the Council's help, and only with its backing will Kosovo be able to develop normalized dialogue and meaningful relations with Belgrade and its neighbours.

The more we invest now, the more stable, sustainable and fair a society we will leave behind. Can we afford not to afford returns? Remember: a stable Kosovo is a key to a stable region. The more support the Council gives us now, the faster we will be able to reduce spending and international personnel.

Members of the Council have visited Kosovo twice. They have seen it develop. Where there was rubble, there are now roads, schools and hospitals. Where there was anarchy, there are now democratically mandated institutions. This has been accomplished through our international presence and the funds that we have committed. I would like to invite the Council to come again and see what it has achieved.

We have to finish the job we started together. It will still take time, but this is now the decisive phase.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to Mr. Nebojša Čović, Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia and President of the Coordination Centre of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija.

Mr. Čović (Yugoslavia) *(spoke in Serbian; interpretation provided by the delegation)*: Before I address the Council, I should like to extend my greetings to Mr. Kouchner, who has made a great contribution to Kosovo and Metohija in the process of the reconciliation of different ethnic groups.

There is a province on our planet where the old truth that violence always goes hand in hand with fear is being dramatically confirmed. That province is Kosovo and Metohija.

There is a bus line in Kosovo and Metohija that has no timetable. For the sake of the passengers' security, departure dates and times are unknown; so are arrival dates and times. Deputies of the Serbian coalition Povratak come to the Assembly of Kosovo and Metohija in armoured vehicles with a heavy international security detail. In the end, the actual choice of when they arrive or how long they stay in Pristina depends not on them but on the whim of KFOR and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Officials of Serbia and Yugoslavia, the State of which Kosovo and Metohija form a part, must provide information on their travel to the province three days in advance, because it takes three days to carry out the necessary preparations, checks and complex security measures. Sometimes, UNMIK and KFOR unilaterally decide that it is not convenient to do so.

Kosovo and Metohija is, therefore, the only part of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia where people cannot move freely and where insecurity and fear of violence and death have been persistently and deliberately preserved. It would be unfair to say that the current conditions are worse than those in the past. I want to emphasize right away that I genuinely and deeply respect the efforts of UNMIK and KFOR and the results that they have achieved under very difficult circumstances.

Once again, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to express my full support for Mr. Michael Steiner and other international mediators and protectors. I want to assure the Council once again that Serbia and Yugoslavia will do everything possible to help the inter-ethnic reconciliation process in Kosovo and Metohija succeed.

We have proved our genuine intentions by normalizing relations with all our neighbours, by cooperating with the Hague Tribunal, and by having considerably improved the political environment and the inter-ethnic relations in southern Serbia, both in multi-ethnic Serbo-Albanian communities and in settlements with an Albanian majority. Of the total of 12,500 displaced persons, almost 10,000 Albanian refugees have already returned to that part of the country.

We have also proved our genuine intentions by encouraging and supporting a strong campaign for the registration and participation of Serbs in the elections on 17 November 2001, by exhumation of all mass grave sites in Serbia proper, by opening a DNA laboratory centre in Belgrade in cooperation with the International Commission for Missing People, and by the expeditious transfer of ethnic Albanian prisoners from detention facilities in Serbia proper to Kosovo and Metohija. Although we have reached and signed a precise agreement on the transfer of Serbian detainees, not a single Serbian detainee has yet been transferred from prisons in Kosovo and Metohija to prisons in Serbia proper.

I cannot fail to note a few other disturbing facts. The circulation of money made from prostitution and the trafficking in drugs, weapons and human beings has not been stopped. No steps have been taken — not even symbolic ones — to facilitate the return of a quarter of a million internally displaced persons and refugees to Kosovo and Metohija. Furthermore, the donors conference designed to address this problem has been postponed.

Before the elections in Kosovo and Metohija, when the Common Document was signed, the international community seemed to have energetically and enthusiastically advocated a plan for the expeditious return of the internally displaced and expelled. Regrettably, that enthusiasm evaporated shortly after the elections, and the new Kosovo Government has not earmarked even a single euro or dollar for the return of refugees.

Little has been done for the preservation and protection of property. Return of internally displaced individuals and refugees cannot be limited to the

territory of north Mitrovica or a few enclaves. It is essential that there be returns to cities as well and that property from which certain groups of ethnic Albanians have already made enormous profit be returned to its legal Serbian and other non-Albanian owners. Furthermore, unforgivably little has been done to clarify the fate of 1,300 kidnapped and missing individuals.

UNMIK has an historic responsibility to deal with these and other issues. It is UNMIK's duty to continue preparing ethnic Albanians for a dialogue. However, UNMIK must work with the Serbs as well, and regrettably that has not been the case. There is a democratic Belgrade, and there are democratically elected institutions of self-government in Pristina, but there is no dialogue.

I can see a logical explanation for this tragic impasse in the fact that extremism has been marginalized in all parts of the former Yugoslavia except Kosovo. The ideas of a greater Serbia and a greater Croatia have been discarded and suppressed. Yet the idea of another great, ethnically clean country in the region has been neither discarded nor suppressed: that anti-European and anti-civilization project has been preserved and strengthened in the presence of the international mediators. Extremism in Kosovo and Metohija is an extremely powerful force, and sometimes extremists themselves are in power. If that had not been the case, we would have had bilingualism, inter-ethnic tolerance, unbiased police and an independent judiciary.

Some might say that conditions that have been deteriorating for such a long time cannot be improved in a day or in a year. I agree, but I can find no reassurance when I analyse the Kosovo and Metohija of today. Sometimes, even something that seems good is not genuinely good. As reported, fewer murders and attacks on Serbs and other non-Albanians were recorded in the last year than in the year before. Unlike some of my interlocutors, I emphasize that this is only a result of the fact that Serbs and other non-Albanians have been forced to live in enclaves or ghettos and that they have learned to stay away from harm.

In the process of finding a solution to the security issue in Kosovo and Metohija, we cannot make assessments and evaluations based on the number of security incidents. Instead, we should base our assessments on progress made with regard to the level of full freedom of movement. The reduced number of attacks against the lives and the property of Serbs, Turks, Romas, Goranis and other non-Albanians has not resulted in the return of internally displaced and expelled persons. That is a direct result of the fact that UNMIK and KFOR have restricted freedom of movement and the return of refugees in order to prevent security incidents.

I am deeply concerned about the situation in Mitrovica, which is a consequence of the existential concerns of the Serbs and of profound inter-ethnic distrust. In an effort to improve further the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, we offered the head of UNMIK, Mr. Steiner, a draft agreement on the principles for solving the crisis in the northern part of that Kosovo-Metohija town. After Council members have read the draft, they will see that we base our policy and strategy on sustainable compromises and on respect for the interests of all parties to the conflict.

Solutions that have come out of improvisation and pressure have proved disastrous in the Balkans. Let us not repeat previous mistakes. Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) was not written for ethnic Albanians only, to protect only them and to improve only their position in Kosovo and Metohija; it was written for Serbs and for all other ethnic communities as well.

They say that there is no collective responsibility in the democratic world. A few Serbs are being brought to justice before international and domestic courts for crimes and injustices committed against Albanians. We have seen no signs yet that Albanians will also be brought to justice for murders of those who did not belong to their religion or ethnic group, for usurpation of their neighbours' property, for destruction of Serbian cultural heritage, or for ethnic cleansing of Kosovo and Metohija.

Albanian extremism is in a hurry to draw Kosovo and Metohija in its ethnic map as an island, isolated from the region and populated only by ethnic Albanians. Ethnic Albanian leaders, who had an alibi and an excuse for their secessionist intentions during the rule of Slobodan Milosevic, have been refusing a dialogue with the new, democratic authorities in Belgrade as well, as if they missed the old regime. You will not find a single sign in the Serbian language outside Serbian enclaves in Kosovo and Metohija, and

I am wondering whether the result of the proclaimed and expected Europeanization would look like this.

I would like to assure you that this situation does not boost democratic forces in Serbia and Montenegro; on the contrary. Individuals from the old regime now point to the situation in Kosovo and Metohia and say: that is your reward for all the tolerance you have shown and the concessions you have made.

As I have set out what we Serbs — and all the citizens of Serbia and Montenegro — do not want and are concerned about, it would only be fair to say what we do want and hope for.

We want to see an end to media stereotypes showing the Serbs as a threat to European and world peace. We acknowledge that the former regime made tremendous mistakes, and we have been trying hard to explain how difficult it is to carry this burden that we inherited from the past.

We want to see the international community's clear position that the new Kosovo and Metohija must not be built on results of ethnic cleansing and widespread criminal activities in the society. We recognize that now UNMIK and KFOR have jurisdiction over peace and stability throughout the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, and we shall take no steps whatsoever that might result in the failure of the concept of a multi-ethnic character for the province.

We will be ready to support the idea on creating entities in Kosovo and Metohija, based on the model of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but only if it is judged that this idea, used as an interim step, will facilitate the development of local self-government and the protection of minorities, as well as a considerable return of internally displaced and expellees. We will oppose it firmly if there is a generally accepted feeling that it would become an obstacle to a multiethnic character for the province and would introduce a territorial partition. We remain strong in our position, as always, against any partition of Kosovo and Metohija.

We do not want any of our neighbors to see us as a threat or danger. We want to be seen as friends, ready to help in good faith.

Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) on Kosovo and Metohija provides that the province shall be given "substantial autonomy". We do not see this "substantial autonomy" as a mono-ethnic community, divided by a high wall from the countries and the nations of the region. Such a mono-ethnic community, torn from its surroundings, would be a dangerous precedent. It would increase the insecurity and dissatisfaction of the people and the nations in the Balkans to a distressing extent. It would dramatically increase the level of insecurity and would jeopardize the ongoing and future regional and European integration.

We see this "substantial autonomy" as a part of a democratic and stable state of Serbia and Montenegro, which, integrated in the regional and European organizations and initiatives, would be the key factor and a pillar of peace and stability in the Balkans.

Recently, in two international conferences in Belgrade, I talked about the conditions that need to be met to achieve this peace that we have talked about and have dreamed about so often. I said that none of the Balkan conflicts should be viewed separately, but as a part of the regional processes and problems.

Kosovo and Metohija, as the biggest and most dangerous hotbed, should be addressed from the regional perspective, because only such an approach could claim stability. A reverse approach — addressing the region from the Kosovo perspective — would not tackle the integrity of the problem and thus would not be fruitful or, even worse, would prove counterproductive. The status of Kosovo and Metohija cannot be addressed without constantly taking into account the impact of any resolution on the preservation of an integral Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the peace in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia.

Solutions to all regional problems should be sought in compromise and in self-sustainable stability, and therefore all parties to the conflict should renounce their maximum objectives. No party to the conflict should get everything and no party should lose everything.

It is necessary to eliminate the very possibility of a battle for territories and to encourage a battle for rights — the rights of people to work and earn, to develop their language and culture, to live in peace in their homes and on their land, on the hearths of their ancestors and next to the historic and cultural monuments they are undoubtedly heirs to.

I also called for a common approach among the countries in the region that would efficiently take care

of regional peace and stability. I believe that such an approach would be an interim step that would make all members ready and eligible to join the European Union.

Lastly, I said that it is necessary to make a plan immediately and define a precise sequence of steps to be taken in the coming months and years toward establishment of a permanent and sustainable peace in the region.

I have made all these proposals and comments because I feel that we must be very cautious in our efforts to improve the conditions in Kosovo and Metohija as expeditiously as possible. There are some international groups and organizations that have been offering their "good services" without this caution. They behave as if there had been no 5 October 2000, as if there had been no changes in Belgrade at all, as if Milosevic did not reside in The Hague. In this spirit, some have recently formulated a proposal to grant conditional independence to Kosovo and Metohija.

The whole world has rendered support to the democratic changes in Yugoslavia and Serbia, to the return of Yugoslavia to all international institutions and to the readiness of its new authorities to seek solutions to problems in the former Yugoslavia in peace, through dialogue and tolerance, with full respect for the interests of others and for protection of one's own interests. Granting any kind of independence to Kosovo, regardless of whether it is conditional or unconditional, would drastically ignore Serbian and Montenegran concerns and would punish the Serbs for all they have done recently to join the family of worthy nations.

The United Nations is responsible for and fully capable of initiating a dialogue without imposing final solutions. It has the power to make this dialogue successful and worthwhile, and its participants responsible.

I wish to point out that attached to my statement are "Principles of a programme for return of internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija", the "Report on the destruction of cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija" and a letter from the local Serbs from Kosovo Mitrovica addressed to the Security Council.

Mr. Strømmen (Norway): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his frank report, and the Special Representative for his interesting briefing on the situation in Kosovo. We have been looking forward to this first meeting with Mr. Steiner in the Council. The presence of Deputy Prime Minister Čović and his presentation here today are also greatly appreciated.

Norway would like to reiterate its full support for the Special Representative's mission priorities related to economic development, the fight against crime and violence, and the creation of a fair and safe society for all communities. Furthermore, we commend his efforts to develop the benchmarks, as circulated today. We welcome the progress made on the formation of the political and administrative structures of the provisional self-government institutions. This is essential to the successful implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), which presumes both a possibility and a willingness of all communities to participate in the Kosovo structures.

The agreement securing the Povratak Coalition's participation in the institutions is another example of the benefits to be gained through close cooperation between UNMIK and Belgrade. We commend the efforts of Mr. Steiner and Mr. Čović in this regard.

A democratic and efficient government structure in Kosovo also requires a multi-ethnic civil service. But the recruitment of minorities remains hampered by security concerns. It is unacceptable that the lack of security for minorities should continue to have negative implications for the normalization of everyday life, as well as for the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). Concerted efforts are needed to overcome these obstacles.

Norway condemns the recent violence in northern Mitrovica and the attacks on representatives of UNMIK police and KFOR. The situation in Mitrovica is complex. Extremists cannot be allowed to undermine cooperation among the people of Kosovo and the international community. UNMIK and the Kosovo institutions should strengthen cooperation with democratically elected moderate forces on the Kosovo Serb side. Belgrade can play a constructive part in this regard.

Respect for law and order in Kosovo must be enhanced. This is not only a minority issue, but a civic issue affecting all segments of the population. We urge Kosovo's elected leaders to publicly reject hate speech

and other incitement of ethnic intolerance and violence. Sustainable security, freedom of movement and a multi-ethnic society can in the final instance be created only by the people of Kosovo themselves.

Norway fully supports the measures taken by Mr. Steiner in order to more efficiently combat organized crime in Kosovo. Such crime, including trafficking in human beings, narcotics and weapons, continues to be a source of considerable concern, not only as regards Kosovo, but for the region and Europe at large.

The return of displaced persons and refugees remains an important challenge. Necessary conditions for sustainable return have yet to be created. This is also a question of political leadership and courage. Norway would like to emphasize the importance of the work carried out by the Housing and Property Directorate in Pristina. Its efforts to resolve property disputes will greatly facilitate returns, and it deserves financial and political support from the international community.

Norway welcomes Belgrade's adoption of a law on cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We expect the necessary measures to implement the law to be taken as quickly as possible. Reconciliation and mutual tolerance depend on a willingness to face the past. The recent presentation in Belgrade of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe report, *As Seen, As Told*, represents a positive step in this respect. This report documents crimes and violations of human rights committed in Kosovo from October 1998 to October 1999.

Norway firmly believes that close cooperation between UNMIK, the provisional self-governing institutions and the authorities in Belgrade is of the utmost importance for the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). This relationship must be further strengthened, including through further progress on the issues covered by the Common Document. Norway welcomes Belgrade's recent transfer of Kosovo Albanian detainees. We now expect all those involved to intensify efforts to trace the large number of missing persons.

As regards the wider, regional context, Norway would like to reiterate that developments in Kosovo cannot be seen in isolation from developments in neighbouring countries. We therefore welcome further efforts to strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation between Kosovo, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and neighbouring countries, including with regard to the fight against organized crime.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I am very grateful for Michael Steiner for an excellent first briefing of the Council. It is also good to have here with us today Deputy Prime Minister Čović. It was particularly nice, I think, to see Bernard Kouchner here listening to Mr. Steiner's first briefing, and I hope that the French delegation will pass on to him our appreciation.

The representative of Spain will be speaking later in the debate on behalf of the European Union, and I fully associate myself with the statement that he will make.

Speaking nationally, I would like warmly to welcome the Secretary-General's report, and strongly endorse, on behalf of the British Government, his conclusions. There have been a number of very positive developments within the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and within Kosovo during the reporting period, and we recognize that very significant achievements have been made.

I would also like to congratulate Michael Steiner on a truly excellent start as Special Representative. We strongly support his priorities for UNMIK. Strengthening law and order, making economic progress and creating a safe society for all communities are self-evidently important and, indeed, vital, for Kosovo's development as a forward-looking, tolerant and prosperous society.

We also very strongly support the work that Mr. Steiner has in hand to define benchmarks against which progress in critical areas can be measured. This is highly consonant with the approach being followed in other United Nations operations, not least the post-independence presence in East Timor, and we welcome it — not least as a good example of better management practice.

But in Kosovo the development of a political and economic road map for both UNIK and the Provisional Self-Government is a very positive forward step. Using this road map, Kosovo's elected representatives can work towards the development of an effective Government for all its citizens. With our support and encouragement, as required, they can build lasting

security, democracy and prosperity in Kosovo, under the rule of law, developing cooperation with Belgrade and with others in the region.

We would also like to support the proposals of the Special Representative to strengthen minority representation in the Government at political and official levels, although we are disappointed by the continuing delay in the nomination of the minister from the Serbian community to serve in the Kosovo Self-Government, despite the brave stance which has been taken by leading members of the Kosovo Serb community in advocating engagement and cooperation. I want to underline that this delay harms the interests of Kosovo's minority communities.

I also welcome Mr. Čović's continued commitment to improving the situation in Kosovo. Although I noted the stark — perhaps, in places, deliberately stark — contrast between the two statements we heard today, I would like to say to Deputy Prime Minister Čović that teamwork between Belgrade, UNMIK and the Provisional Self-Government in Pristina is essential to make progress in areas of importance to all communities. We welcome the continuing dialogue in the High-ranking Working Group and, in particular, the increasing use of sub-groups to take work forward as quickly as possible. It is important that concrete progress be made rapidly on all aspects of the UNMIK-Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Common Document, particularly on security returns and the missing. You do not need me to tell you, Mr. President, that this is an important element of inter-ethnic confidence-building.

The United Kingdom fully backs efforts to support the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to Kosovo. In answer to Mr. Steiner's appeal for help and support, I would like to say that the United Kingdom is keen and willing to fund projects to help this process, and we are awaiting concrete proposals from UNMIK to take this forward. I would encourage as many partners as possible to join us in this effort.

Like Special Representative Steiner, we remain concerned about the levels of organized crime and extremism. This is a key factor in holding back economic and political development in Kosovo, and in also holding back returns on a substantial scale.

I also want to register concern at the continuing ethnically motivated attacks in Kosovo and the increase in violence against KFOR and the UNMIK. We will continue to support robust action by UNMIK and KFOR against those engaged in such activities.

Finally, I would like to underline our support for efforts to resolve the recent escalation of violence in Mitrovica. All those directly engaged, including UNMIK and Belgrade, should quickly find a solution that maintains UNMIK's responsibility for the administration of the whole of Kosovo while, at the same time, adequately protecting the interests of local Serbs.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic would like to extend its thanks to you, Mr. President, for holding this public meeting to discuss the recent developments in Kosovo. We would also like to welcome the presence among us of Mr. Nebojša Čović, Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia. We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We welcome as well Mr. Steiner, whose briefing on developments since he became the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Kosovo, in February 2002, we find very useful.

As I said, the delegation of Syria welcomes the Secretary-General's report, which contains references to many recent positive developments in Kosovo. The most important of those developments was the formation of a coalition Government in Kosovo, on 28 February 2002, under the leadership of Mr. Bajran Rexhepi, and Mr. Ibrahim Rugova as President of the country. With the formation of the Government, many interim functions have been transferred to specialized ministries. Since their establishment, those ministries have met many times under the authority of the Prime Minister to discuss long-term priorities, and a special budget has been earmarked for their work. The new Government has stressed the need to provide work opportunities and has confirmed the fact that there is a need to integrate all ethnic communities into the country's development structures.

My delegation welcomes the efforts made by the authorities in Kosovo to create a multi-ethnic civil service with an acceptable percentage of ethnic minorities, ranging from 10 to 25 per cent and made up primarily of persons from the ranks of the poor. This also applies at the local level, where we find that the level of ethnic minorities is less than 10 per cent. My

delegation encourages the structure that has been established to facilitate the participation of ethnic minorities in civilian posts. That could be achieved by providing minorities with means of communication, security and protection. This has encouraged ethnic minorities to submit applications for civilian posts in the new ministries.

Syria also welcomes the efforts made to facilitate the return of all the various ethnic groups and displaced persons. A source of optimism for us is the initiative by the new Government of Kosovo to lay the foundations for economic progress, and UNMIK's efforts to establish a propitious climate, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), to attract investment and strengthen foreign trade, which will result in improving the standard of living in Kosovo, the lowest in all of Europe. However, in that context, we must also combat the economic crime confronting the development process in Kosovo, represented by the black market run by organized criminal groups.

Despite the fact that the security situation in Kosovo has recently improved, there continue to be occasional acts of violence and crime against KFOR and the UNMIK police force. It is necessary to combat such illegal acts of violence by organized crime, which serve to cause unrest and instability in Kosovo. The granting of amnesty for the collecting of arms is a very important step that will enable KFOR and UNMIK police to collect weapons and prevent the illegal acquisition of arms by organized crime groups that are trying to undermine the entire climate of security and stability achieved to date in Kosovo.

We would like to emphasize here that it is necessary to provide all the necessary conditions to guarantee the return of refugees and displaced persons, as well as to integrate the various ethnic groups into all walks of life in Kosovo.

We would also like to stress once again that it is necessary to continue cooperation between the United Nations Mission, Belgrade and Skopje to reach agreement with both countries on the demarcation of the border in accordance with the Agreement signed by both sides.

My delegation supports the various observations contained in the Secretary-General's report. We also support Mr. Steiner's efforts to make progress in the important areas of the rule of law, democratic institutions, the economy, freedom of movement and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, as well as his participation in achieving regional stability in the Balkan region.

Finally, my delegation would like to welcome the Council's adoption later today of the draft presidential statement on Kosovo that has been submitted to us.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I too would like to join the delegations that have spoken before me in thanking Mr. Michael Steiner, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, for the information he has provided us and for his presence among us at this meeting of the Council. We also thank him for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General. We encourage Mr. Steiner to continue to work with the same diligence, dedication and ability he has demonstrated in the discharge of the duties assigned to him by the Secretary-General. We also wish to welcome the presence among us of Mr. Nebojša Čović, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, and to thank him for his statement.

With the support of KFOR and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the province has embarked upon what is, frankly, a phase of institutional consolidation and intensive work to give fluidity and stability to the political processes of its autonomous Government. However, the information we receive from Kosovo alternates between optimism and pessimism. On the one hand, we see progress in the consolidation of the interim autonomous Government; on the other hand, we hear that inter-ethnic relations continue to be difficult and that progress in integrating the various ethnic groups into Government structures is slow, and even conflict-ridden and tortuous.

It seems at times that two Kosovos exist. One is moving towards civility, democracy, tolerance and respect for human rights, as well as the re-establishment of normal life under the rule of law. However, the other Kosovo is characterized by ongoing inter-ethnic discord, rejection and the worsening of differences. All those elements encourage violence and political intolerance.

The Secretary-General's report and the monthly report of the United Nations on KFOR operations strongly claim our attention by the clarity with which they describe some cases of violence between ethnic groups and against UNMIK personnel. In this context,

Mexico calls on the authorities of Kosovo to ensure the security of international staff and personnel stationed in the area. Although guilty individuals can be found for each act of violence, we cannot forget that the most important priority is to achieve reconciliation among all the province's inhabitants and the integration of Kosovo. The construction of a multi-ethnic and democratic society in which minorities feel fairly represented undoubtedly constitutes an essential part of UNMIK's mandate and of Mr. Steiner's work.

Exclusion will make democracy impossible. Exclusion only fuels the conflicts that will arise tomorrow. That is why reconciliation among all Kosovars can be achieved only through a series of firm, consecutive actions, some of which require the continuation of others. One of those steps is the essential task of ensuring the return of more than 200,000 refugees and displaced persons. In this context, we encourage UNMIK to make progress towards that objective, which is one of the responsibilities entrusted to it by Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Along with political violence, Kosovo is experiencing the ravages of organized crime. Organized crime corrupts institutions, damages the morale of peoples and breeds distrust. The establishment of the rule of law in Kosovo is also a priority. In this context, Mexico takes note of the progress made on the issue and of the decisions taken by the North Atlantic Council, in consultation with the countries of the region, on measures to strengthen border security and to combat smuggling in the Balkans. The rule of law not only strengthens the institutions and individuals, but also fosters economic growth, development and social integration. Kosovo needs not only assistance, but also investment. It is therefore essential that the rule of law provide a climate of security for investment. Mexico takes note of the announcement that an agency in charge of privatization will be created.

The international community and several international organizations have provided Kosovo with the resources, the firm political will and the hope to lay the foundations of peace, understanding and stability throughout the region. We all wish to see a prosperous, democratic Kosovo that fully respects human rights and is free of prejudice and violence. Mexico takes note of the creation of indices to measure progress made in fulfilling UNMIK's mandate.

The United Nations and the international community, with full respect for the decisions of the inhabitants of the province and in consultation with the regional actors, must ensure that coordination efforts among all parties involved culminate in a lasting peace in the region.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks Deputy Prime Minister Čović for his presence at the Council's meeting and for his statement. We also warmly thank Special Representative Mr. Steiner for his briefing.

The Chinese delegation welcomes the recent progress made by the Provisional Government of Kosovo in including representatives of various ethnic groups. We welcome the positive attitude demonstrated by minorities, including Serbs, in participating in the political life of Kosovo. We hope that this will assist the provisional Government's efforts to establish effective and fair administration throughout Kosovo and, gradually, a multi-ethnic society under the rule of law, with the assistance of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We believe that ensuring basic rights and interests, freedom of movement and normal life for ethnic groups, especially minorities, is essential to the creation of a society ruled by law. We hope that UNMIK and the provisional Government will make further efforts to ensure local security and to improve the living conditions of minorities.

The Chinese delegation is concerned by recent developments in the situation in Mitrovica in northern Kosovo. We hope that UNMIK will deal appropriately with the situation, in full consultation with the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The attacks on United Nations personnel are a matter of concern. We support UNMIK in fully implementing resolution 1244 (1999). All parties and factions in Kosovo are obliged to accord adequate respect and cooperation to UNMIK.

At the same time, we are deeply mindful of the legitimate concerns of people of various ethnic groups in Mitrovica. We hope that the rights and interests of all ethnic groups in that city will be duly respected and addressed fairly. We hope that UNMIK will make positive efforts truly to accommodate the concerns of minorities, to promote ethnic reconciliation in Mitrovica and to create favourable conditions for the return of refugees in order to lay a solid foundation for

a multi-ethnic society and for long-term stability in the city and throughout Kosovo.

The Chinese delegation appreciates the positive efforts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to solve the problem of Albanian prisoners of war. We hope that the Common Document signed by UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will be effectively implemented.

We also hope that UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will continue to strengthen their high-level cooperation so as to facilitate the settlement of a number of problems such as that of missing persons, the return of refugees and border stability.

Mr. Yap Ong Heng (Singapore): We would first like to welcome Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Nebojša Čović and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Steiner, to the Security Council. We thank them for their comprehensive and informative statement and briefing, respectively. Together with the excellent report of the Secretary-General on Kosovo, they have set out a useful framework for a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) to date. This was a suggestion that you made, Mr. President — and which we supported — at last month's public meeting on Kosovo.

Singapore supports the three priorities that Mr. Steiner has set out for Kosovo: laying the foundations for economic progress, tackling crime and violence, and creating a fair and safe society for all communities. At this stage, these priorities are at the heart of ensuring the further implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). They aptly build on those priorities outlined by the previous Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Kosovo. We are honoured by Mr. Bernard Kouchner's presence earlier at this important meeting.

In assessing the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), we must look at the trend lines since the resolution was adopted. We are glad to note the substantial progress that has been made in the political sphere, despite difficult periods of tension and deadlock. Two political landmarks have been achieved since Mr. Steiner took up his post: the formation of a coalition Government and, most recently, the agreement to include a Serb representative in the provisional institutions of self-government in Kosovo. We commend Mr. Steiner for his efforts in this and other areas of priority.

We note, however, that despite the best efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and of KFOR, the rate of return of displaced persons from the Kosovo Serb and other minority communities remains low, and ethnically motivated attacks continue. Of particular concern is the increase in violence against officers of the UNMIK police and the Kosovo Police Service.

We support UNMIK and KFOR stepping up their efforts to create the necessary conditions for sustainable returns in an inclusive society in which all communities can live freely and in peace, and we urge the provisional institutions of self-government to give their full support. We also call on all Kosovars fully to respect the rule of law.

Dialogue and cooperation between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, UNMIK and, recently, the provisional institutions of self-government — imperative for the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) — have yielded positive results, significantly, the transfer of Kosovo Albanian prisoners by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia into UNMIK's custody.

We look forward to progress on returns, the issue of missing persons and other issues listed in the Common Document signed by UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

We welcome the opportunity to participate in today's comprehensive assessment of the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). While not akin to a regular review mechanism for UNMIK, similar to those for all other United Nations peacekeeping operations, such assessments by the Council on a regular basis allow it to review the implementation of the mandates we gave to UNMIK and KFOR.

As we have said previously, reviews are a way for the Security Council to maintain regular oversight and to impose discipline on a system, through assessing the progress made in line with set benchmarks. We are therefore pleased to note that the Secretary-General has, in his latest report, asked his Special Representative to develop benchmarks against which progress can be measured in several critical areas. These benchmarks, as the Secretary-General pointed

out, are for the purpose of providing the necessary political road map for UNMIK and the provisional institutions of self-government.

We agree with the Secretary-General that we should avoid undercutting the achievements made so far and that

> "premature disengagement could lead to a vacuum of power and instability that could be filled by organized crime and extremism." *(S/2002/436, para. 54)*

With a well-defined political road map, all of the actors in Kosovo would have one common, comprehensive strategy to guide their presence and support for the territory. A clear benchmark set would allow them to monitor the progress made and to fine-tune their involvement with and assistance to Kosovo accordingly. The aim at the end of the day must be to establish a viable Kosovo that contributes to regional stability.

We believe that one important aspect of a political road map for Kosovo is a resolution of the final status of the territory. Allow me to reiterate that in paragraph 11 (e) of resolution 1244 (1999), the Council decided that UNMIK should facilitate a political process designed to determine Kosovo's future status, taking into account the Rambouillet accords. Those accords call for the convening of an international meeting three years after the entry into force of the accords to determine a mechanism for a final settlement for Kosovo on the basis of the will of the people. The Rambouillet accords were signed on 18 March 1999, hence the deadline has already passed. For this reason, as well as others, there is now a greater urgency to establish a mechanism for determining Kosovo's final status. The International Crisis Group report of 1 March 2002 on "A Kosovo Road Map (I): Addressing Final Status" states:

> "The refusal to address Kosovo's final status perpetuates an inherently unstable situation. As long as Albanian fears and Serb hopes of Kosovo's eventual reincorporation into Yugoslavia are allowed to persist, efforts to develop normal relations between the two communities, either within Kosovo or between Kosovo and Serbia, are unlikely to bear fruit. While the issue remains open, each side will continue to regard the other as a threat. This puts at risk both Kosovo's fragile peace and the significant international investment in the province. It also ensures that any international hopes of withdrawing from Kosovo will be frustrated."

In its accompanying report on "A Kosovo Road Map (II): Internal Benchmarks", the International Crisis Group also states:

> "Such benchmarks are ... indispensable for assessing Kosovo's internal progress. However, while the achievement of these standards must influence the timing of the implementation of an agreed final status, it should neither delay decisions on status nor determine what form it should take. The fact that much remains to be done internally is no reason to delay a formal consideration of the relative merits of different options for final status."

We agree with the Group's recommendation that a process to move towards the resolution of the final status should be initiated without further delay. We note Mr. Steiner's view that the time has not yet come for such a process to start, but it should not be put off for too long. At the very least, the process should be defined. If put together well, in consultation with all of the major players on Kosovo, a settlement mechanism could in fact serve as a key confidence-building measures among the parties to the Kosovo problem — Serbia, the Kosovo Albanians and the ethnic Serb minority in the territory.

While not prejudging the final status, the mechanism would present to the parties an explicit guide on how the final-status issue could be resolved eventually, and with such a clear process the political will of the parties could begin to build upon the positive trends to address the long-term future of Kosovo in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Although the Security Council cannot and should not determine the final status of Kosovo at this point, the Council must also not delay establishing a settlement mechanism or process that would remove the uncertainties that perpetuate tension and instability in the territory. We look forward to discussing the political road map for Kosovo.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I should like to join others in welcoming Special Representative Steiner to the Council and also Deputy Prime Minister Čović. It is good to have them here for

this discussion and to take note of the significant accomplishments that Mr. Steiner has achieved in his first 10 weeks in Kosovo. The formation of the provisional Kosovo Government and the agreement reached on Serb participation is welcome news and provides a solid foundation for us to move forward.

In his excellent briefing, Mr. Steiner outlined some impressive achievements that have been made in the past months and set out some ideas about prospects for the future that we find encouraging and strongly support, although there is obviously much still to be done. In particular, we applaud the concept of benchmarks, and we support Special Representative Steiner's efforts to promote objective standards of good governance. In our view, those benchmarks are not tied to a specific political outcome, but they should be seen by all as the way to measure progress in building democratic security and economic institutions and processes that are fully representative and responsive to the needs of all Kosovars. I agree with his assessment that achievement of those benchmarks should be an objective in and of itself, necessary for the Kosovans and, indeed, necessary for stability and success in the region, no matter what the outcome, eventually and much later, of a final status discussion.

We are encouraged at the positive response to this initiative from the new Government. Prime Minister Rexhapi's forthcoming statements of support for promoting Serb returns are promising signs of a commitment among Kosovo's leaders to the sort of multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo that is envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999) and that my Government strongly supports.

I also want to note Deputy Prime Minister Čović's contribution and his important and constructive role in representing his Government's views on Kosovo. We ask that the minister convey back to his authorities our assurance that we will continue to support enhanced cooperation between the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and Belgrade.

In that regard, we are encouraged by the working relationship that has developed between Special Representative Steiner and Deputy Prime Minister Čović in 10 short weeks. They have already met several times to exchange views, and we hope that they will continue that act of dialogue, which in our view is the best recipe for avoiding misunderstandings and helping all concerned to deal with the difficult issues ahead.

The progress on the return of the detainees was good news, and we expect that more will be done on return of the displaced and on other priorities in the Common Document in the months ahead. I noted Mr. Steiner's intention to build on that progress and to focus on returns.

Our desire to address Serb priorities in Kosovo should not, however, suggest that we assume that there is agreement among Serbs on how their priorities are best addressed. There is a considerable range of views within the Povratak Coalition on how best to respond to Serb concerns. Some think they can achieve that by actively participating in Kosovo's provisional institutions of self-government, and others think that it will happen only with parallel Serb institutions. Some think that the only way to promote security is to adhere strictly to the rule of law, and others think that they should seek justice in the streets. Those are two very different visions, and it is obvious which one we support and encourage.

I raise that point in connection with the disturbance in Mitrovica on 8 April, which left more than 20 UNMIK police injured and at least one in a life-threatening condition. We oppose any effort to simplify events and to present what happened in Mitrovica as representing a Kosovar-Serb point of view. We think that it does not. The activity of the bridge gang more likely resembles similar actions in the past by Kosovar Albanian extremists, who have also condoned or promoted violence and illegality. But the situation highlights the need for the rule of law, and while we understand the importance of the political issues at play in Mitrovica, we have no tolerance for any attack on United Nations personnel. Respect for the rule of law throughout, by all parties, is fundamental for the future, and we were pleased to see a similar point of view expressed in Kosovo by both Serb and Albanian political leaders.

My Government believes that resolution 1244 (1999) and the constitutional framework offer the best guarantee for all Kosovars. Within those parameters, we will continue to support efforts on the range of issues — security, economic reform, minority rights, the rule of law and freedom of movement — that must be addressed. Interlocking progress on all those issues is the best way forward for all communities in Kosovo,

and Special Representative Steiner will have our strong support in pursuing that.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): Bernard Kouchner, Minister of Health, who was the first Special Representative to Kosovo, took advantage of his presence in New York for the Global AIDS Fund to sit at France's seat and listen to the statements of the Special Representative and of the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Čović. By that gesture, he wished to indicate France's friendly and determined support for his outstanding successor, Mr. Michael Steiner. Indeed, that gesture is symbolic of French-German cooperation to help Kosovo rejoin Europe, its values and its ideals of peace, democracy and progress.

France associates itself with the statement that the Permanent Representative of Spain will make later on behalf of the European Union. In my statement, I shall emphasize the issues to which we attach more specific importance at the national level.

During the Council's debate on 27 March, several speakers expressed their intention to contribute to an evaluation of the action of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Mr. Steiner also committed himself to that undertaking and made enlightening comments.

After spending less than two and a half months in Pristina, the Special Representative already has important accomplishments to his credit. His role was decisive in overcoming a persistent political deadlock and in allowing the election of a President of Kosovo as well as the formation of a coalition Government. Subject to the nomination of the final members of the autonomous Government team, the institutions of provisional self-government are already in place. Therefore, the necessary conditions for the effective implementation of the provisions of the constitutional framework for self-government are nearly in place. We welcome the first decisions taken by the autonomous Government, and we encourage the elected Kosovars to exercise fully, with respect for law, the powers delegated to them by the constitutional framework.

We are grateful to the Special Representative for having charted the course by giving UNMIK and the autonomous institutions clear priorities to ensure a full application of the constitutional framework in conformity with the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999). It is necessary to focus on the implementation of those essential tasks. As the Secretary-General emphasized in his last report on UNMIK's activities, it would be useful to acquire the means to evaluate precisely the amount of progress achieved. Using those criteria, it would be possible to measure the respect of the provisional institutions for the great principles of democracy, the rule of law and regional stability set out by resolution 1244 (1999) and the constitutional framework with a view to encouraging the newly elected Kosovar representatives to pursue that path.

Moreover, it is gratifying that the Special Representative and the Yugoslav authorities have been able to develop an extensive dialogue on issues of joint interest. We welcome the presence at the side of the Special Representative of an adviser of the head of the Provisional Government at the most recent meeting of the High-level Working Group. This will help towards the establishment of relations of confident cooperation, which we wish to see, between UNMIK and the provisional institutions, on the one hand, and the Belgrade authorities, on the other. The implementation of the Common Document signed on 5 November by Mr. Čović and Mr. Haekerrup must continue. That Document is a cornerstone of the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), with which it is in full conformity.

On the basis of that text, the Yugoslav Government was able to decide to transfer to Kosovo the Albanian prisoners detained in Serbia and to place them under UNMIK control. That fruitful cooperation should be expanded and the provisions of the Common Document fully implemented. Further substantial progress is essential, in particular with regard to the return of members of minority communities, the recovery of their freedom of movement and the issue of missing persons.

In Kosovo, the rule of law, economic development and the creation of an equal society for all are imperatives that are inextricably linked. Progress must be made simultaneously in those three areas, as the Secretary-General and his Special Representative have called for. This is necessary if a multi-ethnic future is to be built.

In Mitrovica, a comprehensive approach has also been adopted, in accordance with the strategy laid out last year by Mr. Haekerrup for the North Atlantic Council. That approach, which enjoys our full support, is the basis for the activities of UNMIK and KFOR in that municipality. It has borne its first fruits, judging by

the reduction in the number of incidents in recent months. In that context, the recent attacks on UNMIK police personnel must be condemned. All those who wield influence over the principal actors in that city must use it to put an end to intimidation and violence and to achieve the dismantling of parallel structures. Generally speaking, we encourage all communities to respect UNMIK's authority throughout Kosovo. It is in their interest and in that of the peaceful conduct of the process towards provisional autonomy.

Mr. Rivas (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to welcome the report submitted to us by the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), as well as the introduction provided to us by his Special Representative, Mr. Steiner, who, since assuming his duties on 14 February, has worked intensively to promote the Mission's priorities in economic development, eradicating crime and violence and establishing a just and safe society for all the communities of Kosovo. We welcome Mr. Steiner on his first briefing before the Council.

I also wish once again to welcome to the Council the Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, Mr. Čović, and to thank him for his essential contribution to the process and for the information he has provided us.

The Secretary-General's report highlights the efforts and resources that the international community has invested in creating an effective political system, a viable economy and a multi-ethnic, peaceful and law-abiding society in Kosovo. Some substantial progress has been made in establishing provisional institutions of self-government, such as the coalition Government and the Assembly. Many difficulties have been encountered in the efforts to build a multi-ethnic Civil Service, to improve the security situation and to create the conditions necessary for the Kosovar Serbs to remain and for refugees and displaced persons to return. The establishment of bases for economic progress is moving ahead with the introduction of the euro, the campaign against economic crime and the strengthening of the banking system and tax collection.

Advances have also been made in regional cooperation, such as in the transfer of prisoners between Serbia and Kosovo, the adoption of three protocols related to the issue of missing persons, assistance to families and the coordination of border security between Serbia and Macedonia. All such regional cooperation and coordination is essential to the success of the Mission and must be pursued on the basis of the recognition of UNMIK's authority by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

This complex process should lead to the definitive consolidation of the provisional institutions of self-government and to the conclusion of the Mission. To that end, political, technical and financial support is more necessary than ever for the Mission, which is entering a potentially more dangerous phase, as the Secretary-General indicates in his report. This phase in the implementation of anti-crime initiatives may provoke retaliation against UNMIK and KFOR. The attacks of 8 April against UNMIK police in Mitrovica, which deserve our sternest condemnation, are merely one manifestation of the potential difficulties of this new phase. Colombia appeals to all the communities of Kosovo and to the provisional institutions of self-government to work together to ensure respect for the authority of UNMIK and KFOR and to eradicate organized crime, terrorism and violence.

I wish to conclude by supporting the Secretary-General's initiative to request his Special Representative, Mr. Steiner, to establish a system of mediation or benchmarks allowing progress to be measured in such critical areas as the rule of law, democratic institutions, the economy, freedom of movement, the return of refugees and displaced persons and contributions to regional stability.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): On behalf of my delegation, I should first like to join others in welcoming Special Representative Steiner to the Council today. We have been looking forward to this first meeting with Mr. Steiner. We also, of course, welcome Deputy Prime Minister Čović. We are very grateful to Mr. Steiner for his very comprehensive briefing this morning, as well as to the Secretary-General for his most recent report on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). I would also like to thank Deputy Prime Minister Čović for his important statement this morning and to say how glad my delegation was to see Mr. Kouchner with us at the beginning of our meeting.

Ireland fully agrees with the statement that will be delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of

the European Union, so I shall make only a few comments of particular importance to my delegation.

Ireland warmly congratulates Special Representative Steiner on the strong and positive start he has made in only a number of weeks, laying out an ambitious programme of priorities and building on the very considerable achievements of his predecessors. He has outlined a map, as he put it this morning, on how to finish the job and we welcome this.

We also welcome the further progress in ensuring participation by all communities in the provisional institutions of self-government, following the elections by the Kosovo Assembly of Mr. Rugova as President and Mr. Rexhepi as Prime Minister of Kosovo, as well as the formation of a Government. We welcome the agreement on the participation of the Kosovo Serb Return Coalition — Povratak — in the institutions, giving voice to the electorate that they represent in the new Government. It is essential that Kosovo have a truly multi-ethnic Government, representative of all of its people, and we are encouraged by signs that a similar approach is gradually being adopted in the composition of the Civil Service, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report. We urge the fullest possible participation by the minority communities in the public service.

Mr. Steiner has outlined a comprehensive vision for Kosovo's future development, based on economic progress, the rule of law and a fair and just society for all the people of Kosovo. Ireland especially welcomes the emphasis on economic reform and reconstruction, including, as we heard this morning, privatization, which are essential to ensuring real stability in Kosovo and without which progress in combating crime and violence will inevitably be limited. Kosovo's people, in particular its young people, must be given a sense of hope and real possibilities for the future. Jobs will clearly be a key element of this. We heard this morning about progress in both of these areas, as well as in the social services — schools, hospitals and so forth — and in the area of crime reduction. That is very welcome.

Ireland also welcomes the Secretary-General's request to Special Representative Steiner that he elaborate a series of benchmarks in order to measure progress in the institutional development of Kosovo, as well as with regard to the rule of law, the economy and other areas. This is a very positive and constructive development. We have looked carefully at the summary that has been provided this morning and we very much welcome this initiative.

We call on all of Kosovo's elected leaders to work together, including with UNMIK and KFOR, to achieve the objectives which have been outlined by the Special Representative. Cooperation between all communities aimed at achieving these objectives is vital in enhancing Kosovo's European perspectives.

Once again, Ireland also encourages all elected leaders to develop a genuine political dialogue, both within and between Kosovo's communities. We look forward to real engagement on this issue in the approach to the municipal elections in September.

The development of real dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade is clearly a further essential element in the achievement of the objectives outlined by the Special Representative. The Common Document signed by Belgrade and UNMIK last November provides the framework for such discussions, and we welcome the participation, for the first time, of a representative of the provisional institution of self-government at a meeting of the High-Ranking Working Group on 9 April.

Ireland regards the recent transfer to UNMIK by the authorities in Belgrade of Kosovo Albanian prisoners as a key element in developing the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. This removes an unnecessary irritant, but it is also a major step in the process of reconciliation between the Albanian and Serbian communities in Kosovo. We look forward, in the context of an enhanced dialogue, to further progress with regard to the return of displaced persons within Kosovo, as well as to determining the fate of missing persons from all communities. As we have said before, the slow rate of Kosovo Serb returns — despite some progress — remains worrying. A framework of economic and other measures must be put in place in order to increase the numbers resettling and remaining in Kosovo. In this respect, as Mr. Steiner said in his statement, we need a real breakthrough, but this will require a substantial commitment, including a financial commitment.

The creation of a society based on the rule of law is fundamental to the future development of Kosovo and, in particular, to the opening of European perspectives for the province. Democracy cannot take hold in an environment where crime and violence

flourish, and we are deeply disturbed by indications in the Secretary-General's report of continuing ethnically motivated violence.

Ireland strongly condemns, as others have this morning, the absolutely unjustifiable attacks against UNMIK police on 8 April in Mitrovica, which resulted in a substantial number of casualties. Those promoting such attacks and ongoing unrest in the area must recognize the authority of UNMIK throughout Kosovo. We welcome the statements of those local community leaders who condemned these attacks. All of Kosovo's leaders must make clear that there is no future in support for extremism. Economic success can follow only in a society based on the rule of law.

The successful development of Kosovo will help to ensure peace and stability in South-East Europe. Kosovo's vocation lies in Europe. Its progress along the path towards European integration can be determined only by Kosovo itself and by the work of its leaders in building a truly democratic and multi-ethnic society. Ireland, together with its partners in the European Union, will continue to support greater integration and regional cooperation through the Stability Pact and the stabilization and association process. The South-East European Cooperation Process summit in Tirana on 28 March marked a further important step in enhancing regional cooperation that will open further European perspectives for Kosovo.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like first of all to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting.

We would also like to thank Mr. Michael Steiner, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, for the valuable information that he has given us. We reaffirm our support for him.

We welcome Mr. Nebojša Čović, Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, and thank him for his statement.

The Council's periodic consideration of the question of Kosovo allows it to assess the development of the situation on the ground and to take the necessary measures, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999). At the most recent meeting of the Council on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), we were able to welcome the end of the deadlock in the political situation in Kosovo. We were encouraged by the information that Mr. Steiner provided earlier with regard to the fact that the Povratak Coalition has been accepted as a participant in the Government. That is a clear sign that an atmosphere of trust and a climate of peace and security have been re-established.

My delegation welcomes the recent developments on the ground. At the political level, the transformation of the transitional departments into autonomous provisional ministries is to be welcomed. We encourage the authorities to pursue the implementation of the short- and medium-term programmes that they have set up.

My delegation welcomes the efforts made by the various parties to establish a collegial Presidency of the Assembly. We support the establishment, within the Office of the Prime Minister, of a structure to deal with issues of good governance, human rights, equal opportunity and gender. Adequate assistance should be given to that service to allow it to shoulder its responsibilities.

We support the efforts under way to prepare for municipal elections, which we hope will take place in September 2002.

With regard to regional cooperation, my delegation is encouraged by the ongoing cooperation between the Belgrade authorities and UNMIK in the implementation of the provisions of the Common Document.

The participation of a member of the provisional institutions of self-government at the most recent meeting of the High-Ranking Working Group is clearly an encouraging development.

The meeting that took place on 18 March in Skopje between Mr. Steiner and Mr. Trajkovski, the President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the conclusions that they reached on the various subjects discussed, as mentioned in paragraph 46 of the report, are also promising.

My delegation renews its support for the three priority areas set out in the report. Within the framework of establishing economic bases, the efforts under way should be encouraged. In our view, the success of any programme depends on taking into account the interests of all elements and all categories in the province, as well as the objective of the stabilization of the region.

With regard to the issue of security, it is worth noting that the overall situation has improved. Nevertheless, we condemn attacks against UNMIK and encourage the continuation of cooperation between it and KFOR.

We welcome the progressive transfer of UNMIK police functions to the multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Service.

Moreover, we appreciate the steps taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with various parties to achieve a negotiated solution to the various pending questions. In that regard, my delegation encourages actions under way for the return of refugees, the reintegration of displaced persons, the transfer of prisoners, the search for solutions to the plight of missing persons, the strengthening of multi-ethnicity and the effective integration of minority ethnic groups in the active life of Kosovo.

Finally, my delegation fully supports the relevant observations made by the Secretary-General in his report.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you personally, Mr. President, for having organized this open debate on Kosovo. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his detailed and in-depth report on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and to thank Deputy Prime Minister Nebojša Čović for returning to the Council table. I would also like to welcome Mr. Michael Steiner to the Council. I must say that I was very impressed by the clarity of his presentation, which reflects a determined and clear approach to Kosovo's problems and which augurs well for a robust continuation of the excellent start of his mission in Kosovo. My country is convinced that the efforts made by both Mr. Čović and Mr. Steiner to normalize the situation in Kosovo will contribute to achieving the objectives of the international community set out in Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

As a country associated with the European Union, Bulgaria associates itself with the statement to be made later by the Permanent Representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union. I would nevertheless like to make a few comments in my national capacity.

My country supports the approach of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General aimed at defining major priorities in the work of UNMIK that emphasize the establishment of a viable economy that can improve the living conditions of members of all ethnic communities and combat organized crime and violence.

Bulgaria welcomes the establishment of a central executive body of the provisional institutions of self-government of the province. We hope that the entry into the Government by representatives of all communities will be achieved soon. The establishment of provisional institutions of self-government and the setting up of an effective administration whose membership reflects Kosovo's multi-ethnic character will contribute to normalizing the lives of the population. My country supports UNMIK's efforts to ensure equal opportunities for the participation of all communities in the formation of central and local administration in Kosovo.

Bulgaria supports UNMIK's efforts to improve security in the province and to combat organized crime and violence in all their forms. My country fully supports the delegation of the United Kingdom and others that have forcefully spoken of the need to better control organized crime in Kosovo. At the same time, Bulgaria condemns continued manifestations of ethnically motivated violence, including violent attacks against representatives of UNMIK, KFOR and the Kosovo Police Service. Such attacks must be categorically condemned by the provisional institutions of self-government and by all political officials in Kosovo. Bulgaria is following those events closely and finds unacceptable any attempts by groups or individuals, regardless of ethnic affiliation, to undermine stability and the international community's efforts through the Special Representative to bring life in Kosovo back to normal.

My country will continue to insist on a definitive establishment of the facts regarding the brutal murder in Kosovo of the Bulgarian citizen Valentin Krumov and on the need for the perpetrators of that act to be handed over to UNMIK.

Bulgaria welcome's UNMIK's cooperation with Macedonian authorities aimed at creating a common commission of experts entrusted with settling practical problems regarding a common border on the basis of agreements reached. The attempts by certain political groups and individuals in Kosovo to use this technical element for political ends are totally unacceptable and

do not contribute to strengthening regional stability and security.

My country believes that continued cooperation between UNMIK and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is of particular importance. That cooperation improves security and strengthens confidence on the regional level. The agreement reached on various issues — in particular on prisoner transfer and the return of refugees — is both a concrete measure to strengthen confidence between communities and a sign of improvement in the overall atmosphere in Kosovo.

Bulgaria supports the international community in its efforts to respond properly to the need to ensure the implementation of projects of vital importance to Kosovo. My country favours having the European Commission and the World Bank draft a strategy to reduce Kosovo's dependence on external assistance. We also welcome the idea of establishing criteria to allow the province gradually to shoulder responsibility for its own finances.

Bulgaria will continue to participate in collective peacekeeping and stability mechanisms in Kosovo. My country is doing its part by contributing 143 police officers to the international police forces, as well as soldiers to KFOR.

In recent months, we have begun to see a certain ethnic tolerance coming to light in Kosovo. My delegation is fairly optimistic about the future of inter-community relations. My country will continue to support the emergence of a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo that respects universally recognized principles and norms of human rights and the rule of law.

We share the view that the process of the return of refugees and displaced persons is one of the most important signs of the normalization of life in Kosovo. That process is directly tied to an improvement in security conditions, the rebuilding of the economy and the creation of new jobs.

The presence of UNMIK and KFOR in Kosovo is a key factor for security. We encourage UNMIK and KFOR to continue their efforts to guarantee security and a normal life for all the inhabitants of the province, along with the provisional institutions of self-government.

Mr. Gokool (Mauritius): We join other delegations in extending a warm welcome at today's meeting to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Steiner. We are pleased to have him among us today to hear his assessment of the post-election situation in Kosovo and the challenges facing the province now that the provisional self-government is in place. We take this opportunity to congratulate him for the manner in which he has been able to step right into the shoes of his predecessor. We have no doubt that under his guidance the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) will continue to carry out its task efficiently and effectively to build a Kosovo as envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999), which remains the basis for building Kosovo's future. Mauritius fully supports the efforts of Mr. Steiner and his team.

We also extend a very warm welcome to the Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, Mr. Čović. We thank him for his statement. His presence in the Council meetings reassures the international community of the willingness of the Yugoslav authorities to continue their collaboration with the United Nations in building a multi-ethnic, peaceful, democratic and prosperous Kosovo.

We are happy to note the agreement reached on the participation of the Kosovo Serb Return Coalition in the new Government. We call on all elected bodies to abide by their commitments to work together in the provisional institutions of self-government.

The security situation of minority communities in the province remains a high priority of the international community. Ethnically motivated attacks and the intimidation of minority communities, which continue to occur, are matters of great concern to my delegation. Such acts may disrupt the peace process. We commend the efforts of UNMIK and KFOR in the protection of these people and in helping the integration process.

We note with satisfaction the various initiatives undertaken to facilitate the integration process. The concerns of the minority communities must be properly addressed by the representatives in the provisional self-government. The full engagement of the ethnic minorities in the administrative service is an important way forward to confidence-building measures. It is the view of my delegation, as it is of others, that creating parallel structures and opposing the authority of

UNMIK will be most unproductive and not to the benefit of the Serb community in Mitrovica. We view the situation in that area with great concern. We deplore the recent attacks on UNMIK and KFOR personnel in that region. We believe that there is an urgent need for UNMIK, with the collaboration of KFOR and the Kosovo Police Service, to establish its full authority over the Mitrovica region as soon as possible to prevent extremist activities that can undermine stability in the region.

We call once again on all those who can help to improve the deteriorating situation in the Mitrovica region to help UNMIK curb violence and to establish the rule of law in that area. We call on the minority communities in Kosovo, in particular the Serbs in the Mitrovica region, to integrate themselves into the structures established by UNMIK and to eliminate parallel structures. Perhaps the Belgrade authorities can use their influence over the Serb community in the Mitrovica region to persuade them to cooperate fully with UNMIK and the new Government in building a Kosovo in which all communities enjoy a free and peaceful life.

The fate of the detainees and missing persons has also been a very sensitive issue that has remained high on the agenda of both parties. Last month, we applauded the transfer of 146 Kosovo Albanian detainees from Serbian prisons to UNMIK. Some of them have been released, while the cases of others are still under consideration. The decision, taken after long-protracted discussions between Belgrade authorities and UNMIK, was a huge step towards building confidence on both sides. We encourage Mr. Steiner and Mr. Čović to continue their good work.

We also note with satisfaction the various steps taken by the High-Ranking Working Group to determine the fate of the missing persons. It is only through constructive dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina that much can be achieved. We therefore encourage the provisional self-government to engage in such dialogue with Belgrade for the benefit of the people of Kosovo.

Finally, we fully agree with the observations of the Secretary-General, as mentioned in his report, on the need for a roadmap for UNMIK and for the provisional self-government before the international community disengages itself from Kosovo. We thank Mr. Steiner for setting the benchmarks that would measure progress in Kosovo's institutional development.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank you, Sir, for the initiative of convening this meeting.

It will be recalled that we said last month that this meeting would provide us with an occasion to make a sort of mini-assessment of the action of the United Nations in Kosovo. We felt it would be appropriate at a given time to measure the distance travelled and, especially, to look to the future by outlining a strategy based on acquired experience and on an unflinching evaluation of that past action. In other words, today's meeting is very important, and we welcome the Deputy Prime Minister to this discussion, all the more so because his important statement contained much valuable information.

We also welcome the presence among us of Mr. Steiner and the chance to benefit from his insight. His briefing was particularly illustrative of all the United Nations comprehensive achievements in the region and it will hold a place of honour among the documents that assist our consideration. We have in the past expressed our thinking on the initiatives and, especially, the philosophy for action of Mr. Steiner. We warmly praise his tact and, especially, his ability to listen. I believe that those qualities have counted for much in the resolution of the crisis and in the creation of a conscientious administration in Kosovo.

We would also underline and welcome the efforts made and measures taken for the creation of a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo. We do so because we are convinced that Kosovo will not be able to achieve its potential unless security, fraternity, tolerance and, especially, respect for difference prevail. Without those qualities — as we have often said — there can be no Kosovo, whose survival depends on the recognition of two elements of which Mr. Steiner has just spoken so forcefully: its multi-ethnic nature and the resulting integration.

We recall the positive qualities of Mr. Steiner's actions and of the Council's action on the ground because they are fully in line with Cameroon's long-standing concerns with respect to the question of Kosovo. We have expressed those concerns in all our preceding statements: strengthening security, disarming armed groups, encouraging the return of all minorities

and reviving lasting economic and social life in Kosovo.

The pursuit and intensification of such activities remain priority issues in that region. We are pleased to see that Mr. Steiner has emphasized them and put them forward as benchmarks. In order for them to be fully implemented, everyone must contribute to the process.

That is why we would like to reiterate our appeal that an end be put to the violence and murder in Kosovo. We call also for the effective participation of all political parties in the process of rebuilding Kosovo — a process that now more than ever requires determined generosity on the part of the international community.

The United Nations set lofty goals for itself in Kosovo, as enshrined in resolution 1244 (1999). It is in duty bound to achieve them, and that is why we consider that we must now focus fully on the benchmarks outlined by Mr. Steiner. If those benchmarks are not consolidated, our efforts will not be productive in the long term.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Like the other members of the Council, we are pleased to see Deputy Prime Minister Čović here in this Chamber once again. We welcome the specific measures set out in his statement which are being undertaken by Belgrade to promote the comprehensive implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We also welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Steiner, and we thank him for his very informative and usetul briefing.

Our comprehensive discussion today of the situation in Kosovo is extremely timely. It provides us with an opportunity not only to summarize some of the results of the international efforts that have been deployed in the nearly three years that have elapsed since the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999), but also more clearly to pinpoint the key problems — those that require an immediate solution.

Frankly, the results of the process of implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) are rather contradictory. On the one hand, of course, progress has been achieved in a number of specific areas with respect to Kosovo. Indeed, progress has been made with respect to social and economic aspects and with respect to the question of the establishment of a Police Service. Elections have been held in accordance with the Constitutional Framework. Provisional institutions of self-government have been formed. Yet, at the same time, it must be frankly acknowledged that the improvements taking place in Kosovo are affecting only the Albanian population.

At the same time, an entire subset of substantive problems remain virtually untouched after three years. There is no real security in the region. The process of the return of non-Albanian refugees and internally displaced persons has hardly moved ahead. Organized crime, smuggling and corruption are flourishing. Efforts are being carried out from the territory of Kosovo to destabilize the situation in the south of Serbia and in neighbouring Macedonia.

The situation poses a real threat not only to regional but also to European security. Many have spoken today of the fact that the future of Kosovo is in Europe, so let us reflect on those threats that exist today in Kosovo that are also threats to Europe. Who bears responsibility for all of this? Unquestionably, there are forces in Kosovo that are not interested in a normalization of the situation.

But that responsibility lies first and foremost with the international community — that is, speaking frankly, all of us. We adopted that resolution, and today Kosovo is a de facto international protectorate. I think that we all bear responsibility for seeing that, under our control, a new abcess does not fester on the body of Europe. I hope that we all share that sense of responsibility, and that is how I perceive the fact that Bernard Kouchner came to the opening of today's meeting. He also bears responsibility for what is going on in Kosovo, and he is not indifferent to the situation. I welcome his interest in the resolution of many of the problems that continue to plague the area. It is important for all of us to try to resolve those problems as quickly as possible. First and foremost, we must focus on specific issues that would promote the establishment of a normal living conditions in Kosovo for all of its inhabitants and for all of those who wish to return there.

In one form or another, those objectives have already been noted today in the statements of many of our colleagues, and we are in solidarity with those who have as a priority the war on crime — above all on organized crime; the formation of genuinely

democratic and multi-ethnic interim political, administrative and judicial structures that are free from the sway of extremists and criminal elements; the security and equality of all inhabitants of the region, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation; the restraining of political extremism; the return of Serbian and other non-Albanian refugees and internally displaced persons; assistance to inter-community dialogue; the completion of demilitarization and the disarmament of former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) fighters; the prevention of the militarization of the Kosovo Protection Corps; the stepping up, through international efforts, of interaction with Belgrade; the establishment of dialogue between Belgrade and the leaders of the Kosovo Albanians; and strengthened control by the Security Council over the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR and the enhancement of their effectiveness.

These problems did not arise today, and progress has been made in resolving some of them. In particular, I should like — aside from those words that have been heard here today regarding the efforts of Michael Steiner — to make positive mention of the actions of KFOR and in particular of its most recent report. We have focused our attention also on the initial efforts that are being undertaken by KFOR to establish border control; the work that is being done with respect to the Kosovo Protection Corps, including the reduction of its staff and the shifting of its activities towards solely civilian objectives; and KFOR's efforts to take illegal weapons away from the population and to put an end to the activities of armed factions and criminal groups. We welcome the stepping up of KFOR's efforts in these areas, and we hope that it will be able to maintain them.

Particular attention should be devoted to the situation in Kosovo-Mitrovica, which is extremely serious. It would probably be possible to resolve this problem in various ways, but we want firmly to state that ultimatums and the use of force in resolving this issue are unacceptable; we have long said this. The problem of Mitrovica also is longstanding, and we have consistently warned that attempts to resolve it through coercion were extremely risky. We are convinced that this approach is correct. Only political means can help to find a way out of this situation.

Incidentally, it is also difficult to count on the full-fledged participation of the Kosovo Serbs in the municipal elections that are set for September. We do not wish to prejudge the results of the efforts that are now being undertaken to find ways to defuse the situation in Mitrovica, but we would like clearly to state that we see as optimal a situation in which there would be two communities established in the city, each with their own municipal bodies, with the relevant competences. Those communities in turn would then delegate representatives to a common municipal institution of self-government.

Recently there has been a great deal of speculation regarding the final status of Kosovo. Studies by the International Crisis Group have been cited today. Of course, that Group has its own point of view, and furthermore it has no responsibility for the situation in Kosovo. But we, however, do bear such responsibility, and that is why I wish to say with all due seriousness that any attempt at this stage to shift this question onto a practical plane is extremely dangerous. This can be done only when the situation in the region has stabilized and when we have seen clear progress in the resolution of those high-priority problems that were touched on today by virtually all members of the Security Council. The necessary conditions for the beginning of the political process are not currently in place, and thus any kind of hasty action can only destabilize the situation in Kosovo and in the region.

A great deal was said today about the benchmarks set out by UNMIK. I welcomed Mr. Steiner's explanation that those benchmarks are by no means designed to indicate a trajectory on the road to Kosovo independence, but rather to ensure conditions that would ensure a normal life for all in the region. I reiterate Mr. Steiner's statement that it is important that this policy be implemented clearly and that no speculation be permitted with regard to such benchmarks in order to advance slogans of independence. Unfortunately, even today, here in this Chamber, such an attempt was made when Kosovo's prospects were referred to in the context of the development of events in East Timor. I believe that such an analogy is wrong and very dangerous.

It is important that what Mr. Steiner has begun — namely, the leadership of the United Nations mission, on a constructive note — continue successfully. Key to that, in our view, is the establishment of effective cooperation between UNMIK's administration and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The

basis for such cooperation already exists: the Common Document of 5 November 2001 and the coordinated work begun to implement it. We also know that the Special Representative is energetic, persistent and skilled in achieving results, and we are counting on the fact that all of those qualities will be demonstrated in Kosovo in the full and comprehensive implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

In conclusion, I should like to ask a few questions of Mr. Steiner.

We know that the Kosovo Assembly, at its first meeting on 16 April, through the votes of the Albanian majority attempted virtually to revise some of the provisions of the constitutional framework. At the same meeting, despite the position expressed by the Security Council, doubt was cast on the agreement between the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Macedonia on the demarcation of the border. I should like to know if UNMIK responded to those actions by the Assembly majority.

Many here have welcomed the steps Belgrade has taken to hand over the Albanian prisoners to UNMIK. I should like to ask precisely where those Albanian prisoners are right now.

What is the Special Representative's assessment of the course of and prospects for the investigation by the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia of war crimes perpetrated in Kosovo by Kosovo Liberation Army fighters?

Another question concerns the issue of debts of the enterprises being privatized in Kosovo. We have heard that the international financial organizations estimate that those debts are between $1.2 and $1.4 billion. We also know that some of the loans were guaranteed by the Government of Serbia. The fate of property in Kosovo belonging to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to Serbia is another issue relating to privatization. I should like to ask how UNMIK is resolving that issue with Belgrade.

I resume my function as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Spain. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey, Iceland and Liechtenstein also align themselves with this statement.

We welcome the participation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Steiner, and Mr. Nebojsa Čović, Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, in this Council meeting and thank them for their statements.

I should also like to thank Special Representative Steiner for his leadership in the management of Kosovo's affairs. Over the months of his tenure, he has been able to make important progress on a number of issues. The European Union has already expressed its support for his priorities of laying the foundation for economic development, fighting crime and violence, and building a fair and just society with dignity for all communities. We urge all actors in Kosovo to concentrate their work on those priorities in a manner consistent with resolution 1244 (1999) and the constitutional framework.

These three priorities are closely interrelated. A better functioning economy that improves the living conditions of all Kosovars will undoubtedly encourage refugee returns and discourage further emigration from the province, as well as reduce the causes of crime and violence. At the same time, the establishment of a political culture based on the rule of law and the eradication of organized crime and violence will create an atmosphere more conducive to investment and economic growth as well as to job creation. We welcome the concept, being developed by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, of benchmarks that need to be met to measure progress on the path to the future.

The European Union welcomes the progress towards the formation of the provisional Government. It is essential for Kosovo that the provisional institutions of self-government work effectively in service of the population and represent the multi-ethnic character of the province. We encourage the application of those same principles in the ongoing establishment of a civil service.

The Union has repeatedly stressed the fundamental importance of fighting organized crime and violence. While we welcome the improvement in

the overall security situation, we are greatly concerned at the Secretary-General's affirmation that ethnically motivated attacks continue. Democracy will not be able to take root in Kosovo in an environment of insecurity and fear. We encourage the provisional institutions of self-government and all the parties to do everything possible to end violence and extremism. We condemn the recent violent events in Mitrovica and welcome Deputy Prime Minister Čović's statement that the atmosphere of conflict, distrust and violence must come to an end.

We support UNMIK in its efforts to establish its full authority in the north of Mitrovica. We have also welcomed the transfer to UNMIK by the Belgrade authorities of Kosovo Albanians imprisoned in the Republic of Serbia as a very positive step that will contribute to creating confidence among the communities in Kosovo. The Union urges all the parties to continue cooperating constructively in the other areas of interest provided for in the UNMIK-Yugoslavia Common Document, in particular to accelerate the process of determining the fate of missing persons of all communities.

We welcome the work undertaken by UNMIK in coordination with Belgrade to enable the return of all refugees and internally displaced persons to Kosovo. The past few years have demonstrated that, when favourable conditions are created on the ground, especially for the return of minorities, progress can be achieved quickly. More than 1 million people are still displaced in the region as the result of the conflict, and all regional actors must spare no effort to create the necessary legislative and security conditions for return and to allocate the resources to ensure its sustainability.

Let me take this opportunity to reiterate our call on the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to fulfil their international obligation of full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. That cooperation, along with the affirmation of civilian control over the military, will move Serbia and Montenegro one step closer to European integration.

The European Union welcomes the South-East European Cooperation Process summit in Tirana on 28 March and commends its members' wish to further enhance regional cooperation. The rapprochement with the European Union goes hand in hand with the process of developing regional cooperation, which constitutes one of the main targets of the stabilization and association process.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Albania, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nesho (Albania), took a seat at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I should like first of all to thank you, Sir, for arranging this important public meeting on Kosovo. We appreciate your initiative to hold an open debate on a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). To look beyond the present developments on the ground, to make an effort to overview the current results and to approach a consolidated vision of Kosovo's prospects — this is an ambitious and difficult task.

While this idea can eventually become another benchmark on the Security Council's agenda, my delegation would like to contribute to the discussion and to outline what we think are the challenges and prospects ahead.

I am glad to welcome here the Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, Mr. Nebojša Čović, and to thank him for his lucid statement and important messages and, in particular, for sharing with us his vision of the future status of Kosovo.

My special thanks also go to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Steiner, whose energetic and result-oriented approaches we highly appreciate. On behalf of the Government of Ukraine, I would like to express our full support for the

priorities outlined in his statement and to pledge our full cooperation. I hope that what we have accomplished today, no less than what we have failed to accomplish, will encourage and help both Mr. Steiner and Mr. Čović in their efforts to tackle the present problems in Kosovo.

My delegation supports the statement made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

In our view, the current situation in Kosovo should be looked at foremost from the standpoint of accomplishing the main tasks of the international security and civil presence there. Despite a considerable number of critical comments made today, one can see that the general tendency in assessing the current political situation in Kosovo is quite positive. The records of the recent meetings on Kosovo clearly indicate that, on the majority of the internal Kosovo bedrock issues, the Council members are close to consensus. Our optimism is also based on the progress achieved by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in establishing self-governing institutions in Kosovo, in strengthening the rule of law, in developing cooperation with the Yugoslav authorities and in fighting organized crime. Ukraine welcomes and recognizes all these results.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned over the critical situation in the area of the return and protection of national minorities, which might require, in our view, a completely new strategy. In this regard, we call on UNMIK to pay particular attention to implementing confidence-building measures between all national communities in Kosovo and, together with KFOR, to taking robust steps to further improve the security environment in the province. We also appeal to the Kosovo self-governing institutions and all Kosovo leaders to actively promote security and returns and to vehemently combat extremism in all its forms and manifestations.

It might seem to be quite a paradox, but in settling the Kosovo issue, the international community still lacks the most important tool: a general vision and a single comprehensive strategy on the future of Kosovo as a multi-ethnic society. Though the wide range of tasks outlined in resolution 1244 (1999) is in the process of completion, today it is practically impossible to assess general progress in the province and, in many cases, UNMIK and KFOR remain in the position of so-called firefighters on an ad hoc basis.

In such circumstances, all the positive elements of the Security Council's deliberations on the Kosovo issue and all the appeals to establish a secure environment and to promote a climate of law and order can easily be considered as some kind of snapshot, as Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore called it during one of our previous debates on Kosovo. In this regard, I cannot but cite a number of conclusions reached by the International Crisis Group (ICG) in its recent report, "A Kosovo Roadmap":

> "In order to move towards a resolution of Kosovo's final status, two distinct aspects need to be considered: an 'external' and an 'internal' dimension. The 'external' dimension involves devising a process to address final status, including all of the different actors with a stake in Kosovo's future. The 'internal' dimension concerns the development of Kosovo's own democratic institutions, the rule of law and human rights, so as to prepare Kosovo for whatever final status may eventually be agreed."

As the ICG mentions, these two parallel paths need to be negotiated simultaneously in order to reach the desired destination: a stable, democratic Kosovo standing on its own feet, peacefully integrated into its region and with a clearly defined place in the international community. My delegation does not support all the conclusions reached by the Group, but we believe that, in the future, there will be a need to start elaborating a common comprehensive vision of possible ways to ensure a democratic, multi-ethnic society in Kosovo.

From our viewpoint, this strategy has to reflect the further commitment of the international community to political and economic stabilization in Kosovo. We believe that it should include the concept of performance standards outlined today by Special Representative Steiner. It should also encourage a stable partnership between the self-governing institutions of Kosovo and the Yugoslav authorities and strengthen the dialogue between Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serbs and other national minorities in the province.

Ukraine welcomes the recent progress achieved by UNMIK in the formation of the executive bodies of the provisional institutions of self-government of

Kosovo. In particular, we commend the readiness of all the communities to participate in their activities and to promote an inter-communal confidence-building dialogue.

My delegation considers the recent transfer of the Kosovo Albanian detainees from Serbia to Kosovo to be an important step in this regard. We fully support the view that attention should now be turned to accelerating the process of determining the fate of missing persons of all communities.

As UNMIK enters a new, potentially more dangerous phase in the sphere of anti-crime activities, my delegation expresses its full support for the Mission and calls for all necessary measures to be taken to combat organized crime and terrorism in the province. We also note with satisfaction the clear vision outlined by Mr. Steiner of Kosovo's economic priorities, aimed at reviving the economy and creating new jobs. International assistance and help is greatly required for these tasks, which are among the most burning issues in the province.

Finally, in pledging our support to Mr. Steiner and his team, I would like to conclude by quoting his famous compatriot, renowned poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who once said:

> "Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness ... Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth, ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commi oneself, then providence moves too ... Whatever you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now."

The President (*spoke in Russian*): We can be guided by that quotation in our work on many other issues.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Albania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nesho (Albania): Let me first congratulate you, Sir, on the enormous amount of excellent work being done by your delegation during your presidency of the Security Council this month with regard to the situation in the Middle East, as well as to other matters.

At the same time, let me welcome the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Steiner. My delegation fully supports the statement that he made today. Albania commends the great work that he has done — even though he has spent such little time in the country — as well as his foresight, maturity, professionalism and determination to carry out the difficult task of creating a democratic, multi-ethnic society in Kosovo, ready to be integrated at some point in the future into the European family.

As you mentioned in a previous Security Council meeting, Mr. President, during today's discussion we will review the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). My delegation would like to take this opportunity to make several comments. Kosovo is a success story for the United Nations and the international community. We saved the nation from the obscure genocidal philosophy of the previous regime. Reconciliation between the people, which was desirable but difficult to arrive at, has been achieved. We are in the process of creating democratic institutions. Finally, there are provisional institutions of self-government able to respond to the will of the people and to take responsibility.

My Government fully supports the work done so far by UNMIK, as well as its future activity. We support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Steiner. It is essential for all the parties involved in the region to fully support them in the successful implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). We believe that the important — indeed, essential — message of that resolution, the message sent by the international community, is not about who will rule or reign over Kosovo, but about the creation of democratic institutions and the future of a multi-ethnic society there, one in which the people can speak freely and, Albanian and Serb together, choose their future.

We would like to note that democratic activities and a democratic attitude are the responsibility of a Government to its people and do not entail the right of that Government to be compensated by the international community. At the same time, we would like once again to stress that the old ideas of creating a greater Serbia, a greater Croatia or a greater Albania belong to history; no one should re-activate them. These provocative ideas are dangerously reborn when

one party is a slave to the past, as reflected in its policy towards Kosovo and the region.

In conclusion, we would like to say that Albania fully supports the activities of the Special Representative, Mr. Steiner, and we believe that there will continue to be progress in Kosovo in the future, for the benefit of peace and security in the region, as well as for the international community as a whole. At the same time, we would like to stress that, in future Security Council meetings on this subject, elected representatives from Kosovo should be present, in addition to Mr. Steiner.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Albania for his kind words addressed to me.

Despite the lateness of the hour, I would like to give the floor first to Mr. Steiner, and then to Mr. Čović, for their final comments.

Mr. Steiner: Let me first thank all the speakers here in the Council for the support that I have received for the concept of priorities and benchmarks. Let me say, too, that of course the situation is not easy and there is no doubt that we still have serious shortcomings. Deputy Prime Minister Čović has rightly pointed out the fact that freedom of movement for non-majority communities is still in a very unsatisfactory state. That is one of the reasons why freedom of movement for all is part of the benchmarks concept.

Let me just respond briefly to the specific points that have been mentioned. First, on the transfer of prisoners, I join those who have commended the step taken by Belgrade to transfer prisoners, after two and a half years, to Kosovo, where they legally belong. The agreement that Mr. Čović and I both signed relates to how we will deal with these cases — specifically, cases within Kosovo — in the future. We have identified 16 prisoners who fall under the terms of the agreement, which is shaped in accordance with the European agreement on the transfer of prisoners. We and lawyers from Belgrade have asked these prisoners whether they want to leave. We cannot force them; that is something which needs to be done voluntarily. Unfortunately, I must say that so far not one has taken up this opportunity to be transferred to a prison in Serbia proper. We are ready, of course, if the prisoners agree, to follow this up expeditiously.

Let me also say a word about Mitrovica, as it has been mentioned by the representative of China and others. I think we need to keep the facts straight. On 8 April, policemen doing their jobs were attacked — not only with stones, but also with bullets and hand grenades. Twenty-two were wounded and, as has already been said, one seriously. By the way, that is the reason why Polish Prime Minister Miller went to northern Kosovo a day later to express his solidarity with UNMIK. So here, on this issue, we are talking simply of criminal acts. We cannot respond to those acts with agreements on horizontal redrawings of maps, on whatever level, or by taking action against the proceedings of international judges.

As I have outlined several times, what is necessary first in Mitrovica is a calming of the situation. We also need to have an unhindered international presence in the north, including international police. Once we have the situation there normalized and we have an international presence as prescribed by resolution 1244 (1999) — and of course the Serb community also has legitimate interests and concerns — we can talk about the delegation of competencies to municipalities and about the re-assessment of the operations of local communities.

But first things first. When we talk about Mitrovica, we should not forget the facts. Mitrovica is a municipality with 130,000 inhabitants. Ninety per cent of the inhabitants of Mitrovica are non-Serbs. If one looks at the news coming from that area today, I am being heavily criticized for not moving forward in avoiding parallel structures and in deploying the international presence everywhere, including the north. One has to see that for every action there is an opposite reaction. One also has to see that we need to support others living in the municipality.

I think that the answer — and my understanding in our discussions with Mr. Čović was that, in essence, we agree on this — cannot be one of horizontal division. The answer must be a vertical answer on decentralization. That must be something that happens in the whole of Kosovo. I also think that we need economic help and that small and medium businesses in the north should be helped. I would be very grateful if Belgrade would support, and continue to support, such an approach to decentralization once we have calmed the situation.

Return was mentioned as one of the core issues we need to address, and I totally agree. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has put the official number of minority Serbs, Bosniacs and others who have returned so far at 453,000. That is not enough by far. This is an issue on which we must now put priority. I think we have a chance to do that, because for the first time we can follow an integrated approach. If we have finally nominated a Serb coordinator for returns within the Government; if we have nominated a senior adviser on returns for my Office from among the Kosovo Serbs; if we see that, while the climate on the ground is still difficult, it has changed; and if one listens to what Prime Minister Rexhepi is telling the mayors out there in Kosovo about returns — then that is good news. We have the right messages going out to Kosovo from the provisional institutions. Now, if we have the institutions, the representatives and the Serbs involved in an integrated approach on return, and if we do it together with Belgrade — which has to play a decisive role here because most of the internally displaced persons are, of course, in Serbia proper — if all those factors are working together, I think we have a chance. For one thing is also clear, 2002 and next year will be decisive when it comes to returns.

Let me now answer your specific questions, Mr. President.

With regard to the Agreement between Belgrade and Skopje on the borders and the position of the Assembly and the institutions, I have made UNMIK's position clear on every occasion in Pristina and in Skopje. In March of last year, the Security Council called for respect for that Agreement. I have said to everyone who wants to hear it and to those who do not want to hear it that that is also the position of UNMIK. Now, if there are different views — and that is something I cannot forbid — that is one thing, but I have also made it clear to the provisional institutions that they have no competence as provisional institutions to take any decisions to the contrary. If the Assembly discusses these issues, I cannot hinder it, but what I can and will hinder, as I have told Mr. Čović, is any decision by the Assembly in this area, because it is an area of reserved power and not for the Assembly.

Mr. President, you have asked where the prisoners are. Those who have been found guilty by international judges of having committed the crimes of murder, stealing and so on are in prison in the north-east of Kosovo, and they will stay there. After a review and decision by international judges, those who have been found not guilty have been or will be released. Every step we are taking here we are taking together with the international judges.

You have also asked, Mr. President, about the status of the review of possible war crimes. You must understand that I cannot disclose judicial processes here, but let me say one thing very clearly. First, Carla del Ponte was in Pristina about a week ago and said that the court is currently investigating three cases concerning Kosovo. We will see what the outcome is in that case. If there is an indictment — of whomever and on whatever charge, whether of a member of the Kosovo Liberation Army in Kosovo or not — we will arrest that person. That is our role. We are duty-bound to do it and we will do it.

Finally, with regard to the question of privatization and property of the Federal Republic or Serbia, it is highly disputed who owns what. This is the reason why, in our draft legislation on the Kosovo Transfer Agency, we have frozen the whole question of ownership. We will introduce an economic framework that can boost the economy without addressing or interfering with the question of who owns what. We have simply frozen the question. It is too complicated to solve now and, were we to wait for a solution to it before solving the problem of property, we would not get the economy going. We simply do not have the time to do that in a situation where financial contributions from donors are declining and the international presence is being downscaled.

The representative of Singapore addressed, as have others, the issue of final status and referred, as Mr. Čović has, to the report of a very active organization which follows the situation in Kosovo. Let me be very clear on this issue. Yes, we will have to address this issue when the time is right, under resolution 1244 (1999), paragraph 11. We will do so in the form of a dialogue with Belgrade, of course. But I continue to believe that the time for that has not yet come. I think that we need to do first things first. My philosophy on this issue would be standards first, then status. That means we need to do our homework now.

That is what the people in Kosovo want too, irrespective of whether they are Serbs, Kosovo Albanians, Bosniacs or others. What do these people want? Do not forget that more than 50 per cent of the

population is under the age of 23. They are young people. They want jobs, reliable institutions and security. Those are the issues that we need to address first.

I firmly believe that if we address those benchmarks — even if not in an ideal way — which will still take time, the question of how we should address and discuss the question of the final issue will be much easier. But that is not the issue for the moment. I think we have to concentrate on the things that the population expects of us. I talk to these people constantly. No one asks me about the final status. Politicians may, but not normal people. Normal people want to have electricity, security, jobs and their normal, decent living. That is what we are there to address first. That is why I frankly believe that prematurely addressing final status issues would not help us in the current situation.

Finally, sometimes in the evening I, too, am pessimistic and am concerned at our slow progress on the issues that the Council has rightly mentioned. But there is something that comforts me. I think that we have three allies. The first ally — and forgive me for saying so, but it is true — is the Secretary-General of the Organization. To have the support for this enormous Mission from the Secretary-General and from the Secretariat here in practice is extremely helpful to us.

The second ally is the Security Council, representing the international community. The Council support for what we are doing — as we report to it in the hope that the Council supports our philosophy and line of action — is quite a powerful tool. I must say that so far I am very encouraged and that it is helpful to have this support.

In my analysis, the third ally is the population of Kosovo. That is true for the majority population, the Kosovo Albanians, and for the Kosovo Serbs and the others, because we have the same aims. They want a decent, secure life, and that is how we see our task. Of course, we also address the question of the region and the many practical issues we have with Belgrade. But I think that we have a common line and common goals. For that reason, I think we have a real chance to do our work, which is, in the end, to help create a respectable, inclusive society. Anyway, we have no alternative, and we have to continue along this path.

I just want to thank you once again for all the expressions of support that the Council has made today. It is very encouraging as I go back to Kosovo tomorrow.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Čović.

Mr. Čović (Yugoslavia) (*spoke in Serbian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): We would like to extend our appreciation for the understanding the two of us received. However, it sometimes seems as if we were talking about two different Kosovos.

I would like to comment on some of the questions. We are fully in favour of cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), but we want it to be sincere cooperation based on mutual respect and not on the optics of the past, when we had an undemocratic regime in Belgrade. The Council will agree, I hope, that we will continue to live in the area. We will have to take responsibility for that. With due respect for Mr. Steiner, and all the support we will give him, we have to emphasize that he will finish his mission and leave, while we will stay to share the destiny of the nations in the region. We are truly grateful for all the support and effort of the international community to solve the crisis in the region.

With respect to the integration of Kosovo and Metohija, there will be no integration without respect for fundamental human rights, and the fundamental human right is the right to return home. There can be no freedom of movement without security and without addressing the problem of crime.

In this part of the world, the connection between crime and politics is deeply rooted. I fully concur with Mr. Steiner's invitation to the members of the Council to visit Kosovo, and I would greatly appreciate it if at that time we could together visit Serbian enclaves, spending not just an afternoon or a couple of hours there. I suggest that we spend the night there and spend lots of time with them to see how they live in those enclaves. I think that would put us in a better position to address their concerns.

We are fully prepared to support the integration process. However, with regard to privatization, we know who owes whom and we know that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has the responsibility of paying

pensions to the retirees. However, we also know that we have had a lot of investment made by different funds and we know how much those companies in Kosovo owe to international organizations. The overall debt totals about $1.5 billion. We in Belgrade have to pay all the instalments at a time when the commercialization is being carried out in Kosovo. I think that this is a problem, and I hope that sometime next week we will be able to find a joint approach on this issue.

We support the position of Singapore that at a certain time benchmarks should be used for the assessment of the success of UNMIK and KFOR on the ground. I am very happy to hear about the concept of benchmarks. I regret that Mr. Steiner and I did not have the opportunity to discuss this issue earlier. Some people would say that Belgrade and Pristina did not have a chance to discuss the issue earlier.

I regret that Mr. Steiner and I did not have the opportunity to discuss this issue earlier. Some would say that Belgrade and Pristina did not have a chance to discuss this issue earlier either.

We now have certain benchmarks, and we believe that those relating to regional harmonization must be interconnected. I am glad that we have these benchmarks, as well as agencies that will work to achieve them and a time-frame for their use. I believe that we will be able to achieve these goals, and we are genuinely interested in being fully included in the further detailed development of these benchmarks. We hope that they will not prejudge the final status of Kosovo. I was very pleased to hear Mr. Steiner speaking about this and saying that he felt that this was not the time to talk about the future status of Kosovo.

We support all of the positive statements made by certain members of the Kosovo Government, and we hope that those statements will bear fruit. In that regard, we hope also that we will be able to facilitate the return to Kosovo of a substantive number of those Serbs that have been internally displaced.

In regard to Kosovo-Mitrovica, we do not support any violence or conflict. We do not support any provocation, poor command or any statements made by police commanders who say that they have to fight against "Serbian animals". I do not think that anything can be solved in south-eastern Europe through the use of force.

Let me assure the Council that if the only problem in Kosovo had been Kosovska Mitrovica, we would have been able to resolve it easily. We are fully committed to this, and we have presented our approach to the resolution of the situation in Kosovska Mitrovica. We are not speaking of any horizontal solution, division or partition. The issue here is that we have to help ethnic communities to live normally and exercise their rights.

Believe me: it will be very difficult to resolve the issue of Kosovska Mitrovica if we do not find a way to decentralize the Government in Kosovo and Metohija and if we do not find a way to establish new local institutions of self-government — one of them in the north of Kosovska Mitrovica.

I am sure that if we cannot create normal living conditions in Kosovska Mitrovica, we will have no parallel institutions whatsoever. This is not the only threat, however, because another problem is that the people who live there have no confidence in us either. That is a fact.

We are transferring Albanian prisoners from detention facilities in Serbia proper to Kosovo and Metohija. At our last meeting, I announced that I would recommend that Serbian Return Coalition (Povratak) accept Mr. Steiner's proposal to join the Government. This has been done.

Regarding the transfer of Serbian detainees from facilities in Kosovo and Metohija, I am sorry to note that we have different approaches. Out of 17 detainees, seven declared their desire to be transferred to prisons in Serbia proper. Three were released because they had served their time, one will be released on 17 May, and five do not wish to be transferred from Kosovo and Metohija to Serbia proper. The other is an Albanian who wanted to stay in prison in Serbia proper. All of them are common criminals.

However, what we have not mentioned today is the fact that we are holding nine Serbs in prison in Kosovo and Metohija. In these cases, the Supreme Court of Kosovo overruled the first-instance decisions. In all of the cases, the investigating judges and public prosecutors were Albanians, and we hope that these Serb detainees will also be transferred as soon as possible.

It is not only UNMIK that needs to succeed in its mission. Belgrade must also succeed, and therefore we

must jointly work on all of these issues. I must state my concern about the situation in Kosovo. Any instability, any hasty moves concerning final-status issues could have a very negative impact and destroy the democratic authorities in Belgrade.

I think that confidence-building measures are essential in this process and that the benchmarks that are being created must also address confidence-building measures between different ethnic communities. We cannot be forever taking vengeance against each other.

We regret that fact that Polish policemen were injured. I personally have had contact with senior Polish politicians, and on the day when the Polish Prime Minister visited Kosovo, I was there with the Polish Ambassador. Although it had originally been planned that the Polish Prime Minister and I would meet, that did not happen. I hope that UNMIK police will improve their command, and we are there to render our support in that regard.

Concerning the return of internally displaced persons, one need only look at our returns programme, which has largely been coordinated with the UNMIK Office of Returns and Communities. I hope that we will be able to make some progress. We need funds, and the budgets of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and of the Republic of Serbia have already earmarked and set aside certain funds. To that end, I would ask the Council kindly for its support and assistance, so that we can start this process and make progress as soon as possible.

We believe that the Albanian detainees who were released based on the files that we transferred to the UNMIK judiciary must remain in custody. The UNMIK judiciary decided that they should remain in custody, and this should definitely be the case because international legality reaffirmed the original judgment. We hope that the same principles will be applied to the Mazreku brothers.

With regard to the war crimes, I look forward to progress being made in Kosovo with respect to cooperation with the Hague Tribunal. We believe that existing and potential indictees and their files will not be used to discipline some Albanian leaders, to try to blackmail them into engaging in constructive cooperation in Kosovo.

We should like to express our sincere appreciation for all the support and understanding shown by the Security Council. We are fully committed to the further improvement of living conditions in Kosovo. However, we appeal to the Council to bear in mind that resolution 1244 (1999) is still in force and that Kosovo and Metohija is still a part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

We want to be good hosts and to receive constructive input in the process of finding a solution to the problems in Kosovo. However, I am afraid that we will not be able to share in the responsibility if we are not treated as an equal partner in this cooperative effort. I regret that when Mr. Steiner spoke of three allies, he failed to mention Belgrade as a fourth ally. However, I hope and believe that one day, Belgrade will come to be that fourth ally in finding a solution to the problems in Kosovo.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 2.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4519

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4519th meeting

Wednesday, 24 April 2002, 2.05 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Yakimov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	China	Ms. Jiang Ning
	Colombia	Mr. Ocaziones
	France	Mr. Sticker
	Guinea	Mr. Zoumanigui
	Ireland	Mr. McFeely
	Mauritius	Mr. Ramjuttun
	Mexico	Mr. Herrera
	Norway	Mr. Larsen
	Singapore	Mr. Yap
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Davis
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenblatt

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2002/436).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-35024 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 2.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2002/436)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/436) and the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and supports all efforts by the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the international security presence (KFOR) to implement fully resolution 1244 (1999) of 10 June 1999, which remains the basis for building Kosovo's future.

"The Security Council welcomes progress made in the formation of the executive bodies of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to include representatives of all communities. It commends the efforts of the Special Representative and welcomes the priorities outlined in the Secretary-General's report, as well as his request to develop benchmarks to measure progress in Kosovo's institutional development, consistent with resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework. The Council encourages the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, in full cooperation with the Special Representative and in strict compliance with resolution 1244 (1999), to take on the tasks assigned to them by the Constitutional Framework.

"The Security Council reaffirms the fundamental importance of the rule of law in the political development of Kosovo. It strongly condemns attacks against UNMIK police in Mitrovica on 8 April and calls on all communities fully to respect UNMIK authority throughout Kosovo in line with resolution 1244 (1999). It supports the continuing efforts of UNMIK and KFOR, together with the Kosovo Police Service, in combating all kinds of crime, violence and extremism. It supports all efforts to control borders and boundaries, thus fostering regional stability. The Council supports and encourages further efforts to facilitate return of all displaced persons from the Kosovo Serb and other communities. Interlocking progress in the areas of public security, political development and economic reform and reconstruction contributes to sustainable returns and requires maximum support from Member States and regional organizations. The Council calls on the leaders of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government actively to demonstrate their commitment and support efforts to promote security, returns, human rights, economic development, and a multi-ethnic and fair society with peaceful coexistence and freedom of movement for all the population of Kosovo.

"The Security Council welcomes the decision of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to transfer Kosovo Albanian prisoners into the custody of UNMIK, and encourages further progress regarding the return of displaced persons to Kosovo and efforts to trace those still missing from all of Kosovo's communities, as well as the other issues identified in the Common Document for cooperation between UNMIK and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia signed on 5 November 2001. It considers that the further development of dialogue and cooperation between the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities is vital to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2002/11.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 2.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4520

Security Council

Distr.: General
24 April 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4520th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 24 April 2002, at 3.40 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record.

"On 24 April 2002, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, section A of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 4520th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

"The members of the Council had a constructive exchange of views with representatives of participating troop-contributing countries."

02-35206 (E) 240402

United Nations S/PV.4521

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4521st meeting

Thursday, 25 April 2002, 10.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mrs. D'achon
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-35252 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Council decides to extend an invitation under rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Sima Samar, Vice-Chairman of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan and Minister for Women.

Ms. Sima Samar, Vice-Chairman of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan and Minister for Women, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to Her Excellency Ms. Sima Samar, Vice-Chairman of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan and Minister for Women.

I give the floor to Ms. Samar.

Ms. Samar (Afghanistan): I am delighted to be here today in an institution devoted to peace. I congratulate the United Nations for standing behind its mandate of supporting global stability by rising to the responsibility of supporting the peace process in Afghanistan. That commitment by the United Nations and its Member States has given the Afghan people the confidence to stand against the forces of oppression and evil and to move forward in restoring peace in our war-torn country.

I am pleased that we have made great progress in this short period. In the past few months, we have moved quickly from Bonn to Tokyo to Kabul, putting in place political processes and a Government framework for the daunting task of reconstruction and rebuilding Afghanistan. The Afghan people stand behind the peace and pledge that they will work to bring about stability. We look forward to the day when our national army is prepared and mobilized well enough to respond to acts of violence and instability in any part of our country. But one cannot expect a Government in place for only four months to be able to respond to the level of challenges that we face after more than 20 years of destruction and of a culture of war.

Without the immediate expansion of international peacekeeping forces, peace, democracy, reconstruction and the restoration of women's rights and human rights will not be possible in our country. The rights of women, in particular, are put at risk by the absence of security. Women continue to fear violence and to worry about the imposition of Taliban-like restrictions. Unless greater security is provided, the inclusion of women in the Loya Jirga may be undermined and the distribution of identification cards to enable women's participation in future elections imperilled. Women in Afghanistan are finally beginning to see a little light after a very long darkness. But the gains that have been made in the past four months could easily be lost unless security is greatly improved.

We are told that an expansion of peacekeeping forces is too expensive. But another cycle of war will prove an even greater expense to the world: it will be costly in terms of the loss of human lives. Another period of violence will also risk the money and support that have already been invested in the peace process. Continued instability may also undo all the political work that has been put in place with so much effort by the people of Afghanistan and friendly nations everywhere. It will waste perhaps our last real chance to reverse the decades of violence and to create peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region.

We have heard that Member States are reluctant to extend the security forces in Afghanistan because of the fear that the soldiers will face risks of kidnapping and killing. Yes, those risks may be there, and we must respond by putting everything possible in place to give those soldiers the proper support so that they are not left vulnerable. But if we do not act against the problems that Afghanistan faces, the risks will be even greater.

I know that what I am asking for is not easy to provide. But I ask the leaders of all nations to consider carefully their responsibilities and to weigh the political and economic costs of expanding and extending the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) against the great risks of not taking action and not strengthening security.

Finally, security means immediate and long-term funds to strengthen the Government overall. The amount of aid that the interim Government has received has been very small compared with the pledges and, especially, with the tremendous need. We need financial resources to demonstrate that peace creates changes in the conditions of people's lives.

Let us not leave the job of restoring peace in Afghanistan half finished. The international community must renew its commitment to come together collectively and decisively to root out the elements of instability and give sustained support to rebuilding the peace in Afghanistan and stabilizing the region. We have learned that violence does not simply stay within the borders of Afghanistan, but that it grows roots and extends to areas well beyond the country and the region. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Together, we have a chance to change the future of Afghanistan, to create a model of democracy and peace in an area that is fragile and to restore women's rights and human rights. Help us move forward towards that hope and dream. Help us release the men and women of Afghanistan from a cycle of oppression, isolation and war. With the support of the world behind us, we will step forward confidently, step by step, to transform the future of Afghanistan, the region and the whole world.

Once again, I am deeply thankful to you, Sir, and your colleagues in the Security Council for this meeting on Afghanistan. I know how fully the Council has to concentrate its attention on the Middle East because of the dramatic urgency of the situation in that region. Let me express the support of the Afghan people and Government for the action of the Security Council in favour of peace in the Middle East. We highly support the necessary and urgent implementation of all the resolutions of the Security Council on the Middle East.

We hope for a world without violence and for peace throughout the planet.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

I call on Mr. Prendergast.

Mr. Prendergast: It is a pleasure to be addressing this Council again in the presence of Ms. Sima, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Kabul during the Secretary-General's visit there recently and who struck everyone by the vigour and forthrightness of her positions.

It has been about a month since this Council last considered Afghanistan in an open meeting. One month is quite a long time in the eventful calendar of recent Afghan history, and this past month has been no exception. While I will, as usual, try to cover a range of issues, I would like to begin, if I may, with the emergency Loya Jirga, which is to take place this June and which is the single most significant political benchmark in the Bonn process since the establishment of the Interim Authority.

As I am sure Council members will recall, the Loya Jirga is to comprise some 1,500 delegates, of whom approximately 1,000 will be elected indirectly by the people and 500 selected by the Independent Commission for the Emergency Loya Jirga. In the first phase, district assemblies will gather to select a slate of representatives, known as "electoral colleges". These electoral colleges will then travel to one of nine provincial centres. During the second phase, between 20 May and 3 June, the electoral colleges will elect a number of delegates from among themselves to represent each province at the Loya Jirga.

Given the logistical difficulties, the security environment and the extremely short time frame, even indirect elections present a great challenge. Nonetheless, the first phase has begun on schedule and with success. The first district assembly was held on 14 April in Mordian district, Jowzjan province. Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi attended that assembly and was greeted warmly by the 2,000 people who had travelled there. Mr. Brahimi has reported that enthusiasm for the Loya Jirga is growing across Afghanistan. People are looking forward to their first chance in many years to take part in the political process.

Ten other district assemblies have since taken place and a total of 200 electoral college members have been selected. Some results are particularly heartening

to those who hope to see a multi-ethnic, representative Government in Afghanistan. I refer in particular to the fact that Pashtuns have been chosen in areas where they are in a minority and that at least one woman has already been selected, a modest achievement in most societies other than Afghanistan. As the Council may recall, 160 women will be selected by the Independent Commission itself, but there is no limit to the number of women who might be elected. We hope to see this positive precedent repeated many times through both the first and second phases so that the incredible sacrifices and tremendous responsibilities that Afghan women have borne through these past decades of war are suitably reflected in the composition of the Loya Jirga.

All possible steps are being taken, given the limited resources at hand, to promote a fair selection process. Forty teams of district organizers are currently being trained by United Nations staff and members of the Loya Jirga Commission. Operations centres are being set up in each regional centre and international monitors will conduct spot checks to ensure that the process is held in accordance with procedures established by the Loya Jirga Commission.

However, there is already clear evidence that some commanders and low-level administrators are planning to try to force through the selection of their own people. Discussions on how to provide security for the second phase of the selection process, and the Loya Jirga itself, are ongoing with the Interim Administration and with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) within the limitations of its current mandate.

At present, we can say that the emergency Loya Jirga process is on track. At the same time, I would not wish to disguise the many problems and obstacles that lie ahead. The period ahead will be a busy and challenging one for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), for the Interim Administration and for its international partners, but we remain hopeful and confident that the emergency Loya Jirga will take place on schedule and that it will lead to a smooth transition to the next phase of the Bonn process.

Another significant political development is the return of the former King, Zahir Shah, who, as the Council knows, had been exiled since 1973. The former King has declared his support for Chairman Karzai and the Interim Administration. He has emphasized, too, that he returned not to try to revive the monarchy, but to unite and be close to his fellow Afghans.

Amid these signs of hope, a series of violent incidents has heightened security concerns. These incidents include a failed attempt in Jalalabad to assassinate the Minister of Defence that killed six bystanders and injured many more; a rocket attack on ISAF; several shooting attacks on ISAF patrols; a general increase in the presence of armed men on the streets of Kabul; demonstrations in Nangarhar and Helmand against the Interim Authority's poppy eradication policy, resulting in 16 deaths; skirmishes between Pashtun and Tajik troops in the west of the country; sporadic fighting in Nimroz between a commander backed by Ismail Khan and the provincial authorities; and fighting in Wardak province over the governorship of the province.

In particular, I would like, in this context, to highlight the tragic killing on 10 April of Mr. Shah Sayed, an Afghan working for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). His death adds to a disturbing pattern of attacks on civilians, including humanitarian personnel, especially in the north of Afghanistan.

The Interim Administration has taken some actions to respond to the deterioration of the security situation, though its capabilities are limited. In particular, the Administration sent a delegation to mediate the conflict in Wardak province, which occurred at Maidan Shahr, not far from Kabul. This delegation had some success, although tensions remain.

The Interim Administration's National Security Directorate also carried out mass arrests in early April, the aim of which was described as being to pre-empt suspected terrorist attacks. The International Committee of the Red Cross was given access to the prisoners and a few were released, but more than 200 remain in custody. Three weeks after the arrests, no charges have been brought, nor has evidence against the suspects been produced. UNAMA representatives met with the head of the Security Directorate to express their concerns. They were assured that the investigation would be completed soon, after which charges would be pressed or prisoners would be released. UNAMA will be following this issue very closely.

The Interim Administration has at the same time made a determined effort to eradicate this year's poppy crop. With the financial assistance of the United Kingdom, the Administration has given farmers a choice between accepting financial compensation for each hectare destroyed and facing the forcible eradication of their crop. This policy has provoked fierce opposition from the farmers. The Administration has nonetheless managed to destroy more than 2,000 hectares and has paid $3 million in compensation. I might mention here that the European wholesale value of the eradicated crop is in excess of $300 million.

There are, however, 65,000 hectares which are still estimated to be under poppy cultivation, and harvesting of the crop has already begun in some provinces. The Interim Administration faces active resistance and lacks the means to carry out a comprehensive destruction of the crop. The Administration has asked for international assistance to help farmers plant and market alternative crops. We urge the international community to respond to these appeals. If the Administration is successful, this will not only help to improve security in Afghanistan, but it will also reduce problems stemming from the illegal drug trade in consuming countries as well.

Members of the Council have often noted the need for Afghans to take charge of their own security. In this regard, the Interim Administration has outlined a coherent vision for its future security sector and a plan to bring about that vision. In his briefing during informal consultations on 5 April, the Secretary-General noted the very positive results of the Geneva conference of security donors. At that conference, the Interim Administration presented comprehensive papers on the formation of an Afghan national police force and army. A follow-up conference will be held next month.

The need for an effective police and corrections system is demonstrated by recent allegations of human rights abuses, which I would like to address now. In early April, a member of the Loya Jirga Commission and representatives of the Hazara community approached UNAMA with allegations that mass graves had been found in Bamiyan province. UNAMA fielded a preliminary mission to the area and, based on the findings of that mission, Mr. Brahimi has asked the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to identify forensic experts in the human rights field who could travel to Bamiyan to conduct a more thorough investigation. This mission will take place later in the month.

Also, during his visit to Mazar-i-Sharif on 14 and 15 April, Mr. Brahimi raised with local leaders, including Mr. Rashid Dostum and Mr. Mohammad Atta, the issue of ongoing attacks on Pashtun minorities in the north. Mr. Brahimi gave them copies of the Human Rights Watch report that documented such incidents. He emphasized the need to take effective steps quickly to end the attacks. The leaders gave assurances that they would do so.

I turn now to issues of relief and reconstruction. In the past few months there have been signs that the economy has begun to recove and that this recovery is reaching many Afghans. While the international community must remain focused on meeting basic human needs, there is growing scope for rehabilitation and reconstruction activities as well.

It is therefore a matter of great concern that funds pledged at Tokyo for such activities have been extremely slow to arrive. While donors may, understandably, want to wait for more stability before disbursing funds, we must also recognize that implementing rehabilitation and reconstruction projects will greatly help bring about that stability. It is a chicken-and-egg situation. As resolution 1401 (2002) — which was adopted unanimously by the Council — recognizes, the provision of reconstruction assistance can, under certain conditions, promote conditions of law and order. We would therefore urge Member States to meet their pledges so that reconstruction and development funding can be used to help promote a secure environment for political and economic change.

In anticipation of the funding pledged at Tokyo, UNAMA has begun to plan recovery and development activities in cooperation with the Interim Authority. At the request of the Authority, UNAMA is leading efforts to design and implement a series of integrated area development programmes in ten priority regions of the country.

On a related matter, the first meeting of the Implementation Group was held in Kabul on 10 and 11 April. The Council will recall that the Implementation Group was formed during the Tokyo conference to oversee the use of funds pledged for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. At the meeting, the Interim Administration presented its current operating budget.

Many donors congratulated the Administration on its ability to produce a clear and realistic budget, an impressive national development framework draft, and a list of quick-impact projects to be implemented immediately. Mr. Karzai told the group that donor disbursements must be urgently accelerated to meet the operating budget and emergency needs.

The pace of return of refugees from neighbouring countries has exceeded expectations. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has estimated that in the first eight weeks of its facilitated repatriation programme, more than 300,000 refugees have returned to Afghanistan. This represents the fastest return of refugees anywhere since the end of the Kosovo war in 1999.

In the area of food assistance, efforts by the World Food Programme to meet the immediate food needs of more than 6 million Afghans are increasingly jeopardized by a serious depletion of cash and commodity resources. On 18 April, confirmed donor pledges for food assistance amounted to less than half of what is required to sustain current operations. Furthermore, recent vulnerability assessments have shown that the food needs in Afghanistan are greater than originally estimated. United Nations efforts to mitigate food insecurity have been constrained by inter-factional fighting and demonstrations against the poppy eradication campaign in the south and east of the country.

As we have seen so often in Afghanistan, humanitarian emergencies succeed each other, and their damaging effects are exacerbated by destroyed infrastructure and weakened social coping mechanisms. After great efforts were made to provide assistance to the victims of two earthquakes near Nahrin in northern Afghanistan, reports emerged of a massive plague of locusts in the north. This plague directly threatens crops in Balkh, Kunduz, Baghlan and Samanghan provinces, which are already suffering from drought. FAO has deployed its existing stocks of pesticides and is expecting additional stocks in the next three weeks to address the locust plague.

In the health sector, a nationwide polio immunization campaign was launched on 16 April, targeting 6 million Afghan children and mobilizing the support of 60,000 volunteers. These vaccination efforts are expected to succeed in stopping the transmission of polio in Afghanistan by the end of 2002.

I have tried to describe a picture of the United Nations working with greater coordination among its constituent parts, as well as hand in hand with the Interim Authority created by the Bonn Agreement. International support for the Bonn process has been generous so far, and instrumental in the progress that has been made.

At the same time, I would not want to leave any illusions about the obstacles ahead, the scale of the resources still required or the pressures that the Interim Administration continues to face. After so many years of war and civil war in Afghanistan, the political and humanitarian progress of the past several months is very encouraging. However, this progress is still by no means assured. Security remains a major challenge in many parts of the country, and substantial financial assistance is going to be required. I would therefore like to conclude with an appeal to international community to speed up the delivery of its assistance and to broaden its scope to include still unmet needs related to security.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Prendergast, for his comprehensive briefing.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4522

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4522nd meeting

Friday, 26 April 2002, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

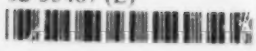
Agenda

The situation in East Timor

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (S/2002/432 and Add.1).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-35467 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (S/2002/432 and Add.1)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Thailand and Ukraine in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Stuart (Australia), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Maquieira (Chile), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Naidu (Fiji), Mr. Widodo (Indonesia), Mr. Motomura (Japan), Mr. Zainuddin (Malaysia), Mr. MacKay (New Zealand), Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal), Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea), Mr. Arias (Spain), Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Xanana Gusmão, President-elect of East Timor, and His Excellency Mr. Mari Bin Amude Alkatiri, Chief Minister of East Timor.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the President-elect of East Timor, Mr. Xanana Gusmão and to the Chief Minister of East Timor, Mr. Mari Bin Amude Alkatiri. I request the Associate Chief of Protocol to escort them to their seats at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/432 and Add.1, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor.

I should like to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, to whom I give the floor.

The Secretary-General: We are approaching a historic moment for East Timor and, indeed, for the United Nations. It is with considerable emotion that I join you in welcoming the elected leaders of the people of East Timor — President-elect Xanana Gusmão and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri — who will participate in this debate, and to whom, in less than one month's time, the United Nations will joyfully hand over full responsibility for the destiny of their country.

Since the tragic events of September 1999, which followed the democratic decision of the East Timorese people to seek independence, the United Nations has been working hard to build a sustainable national administration, in close partnership with Member States and, most importantly, with the East Timorese themselves.

It may have seemed improbable to some at that time that East Timor would become a viable State within two and a half years. But I believe history is about to confound the sceptics. Credit for this should

go first and foremost to the East Timorese people, who have shown great courage and perseverance in rebuilding their country.

They have risen to every challenge that has confronted them and have unfailingly demonstrated their commitment to democracy. There are still daunting challenges ahead, but with a determined and dedicated leadership in place, and a strong constitutional foundation, I believe they can now face the future with confidence.

We, the international community, can also take pride in the contribution we have made. After the swift restoration of order by the international force, authorized by this Council, the United Nations itself was given a mandate of unprecedented scope under resolution 1272 (1999), adopted on 25 October 1999.

Since then, peace has been secured, and basic governmental structures and laws have been put in place. A sense of normality has returned. Children are attending schools, roads are being built, buildings reconstructed, health systems established, and new businesses are opening up every day.

The citizens of East Timor have turned out in overwhelming numbers to vote in the Constituent Assembly and presidential elections. Most encouragingly, in the last few months increasing numbers of refugees have returned.

But all this is only the start. The Government of East Timor faces enormous tasks before — and, above all, after — 20 May. It must not be left alone. The international community must ensure that the investment it has made does not go to waste. It will still have a crucial role to play in helping the Timorese to consolidate their new institutions. That is why I very much hope the Council will approve the detailed proposals for a follow-on peacekeeping presence contained in my report.

In the initial stages, this mission — called the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) — will provide support in three areas that are critical for the stability and viability of the new State: public administration, law and order, and external security. That support will be reduced gradually over two years, as the role of the United Nations becomes one of providing normal development assistance.

I am confident that the Timorese will continue to develop their own sources of revenue and to manage their resources prudently, in keeping with their track record thus far. But East Timor will continue to need financial and budgetary assistance. Moreover, sustainable growth will require investment from the private sector, both domestic and foreign. I urge all Member States to do their utmost to encourage it.

Good relations with its nearest neighbours will be essential to East Timor's future stability. This will include close cooperation with Indonesia, in order to ensure timely agreement on the delimitation of the border, on the situation of the remaining refugees in West Timor and on cooperation in prosecuting those accused of the serious crimes committed in 1999.

Confidence is vital, and the best way to provide it is to continue the strong partnerships that have brought East Timor this far. I trust this will continue throughout the mandate of UNMISET, and beyond.

I hope to be present in person for the independence ceremonies on 19 and 20 May, and I must say I look forward to that historic night with some excitement. It will mark the climax of the East Timorese people's historic struggle to assert their right of self-determination, which I have no doubt will be celebrated in song and story for centuries to come.

As Secretary-General, I am proud of the part the United Nations has played in that struggle, and I am especially pleased that we are now in this last phase. I pledge that this will mark not an end, but a new beginning, and that the United Nations stands ready to play its full part alongside the independent nation of East Timor.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I give the floor to Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi to introduce the Secretary-General's report.

Mr. Annabi: Mr. President, at the outset I wish to join the Secretary-General in welcoming President-elect Xanana Gusmão and the Chief Minister of the East Timorese Government, Mari Alkatiri, who are here with us today to participate in this important meeting.

The Secretary-General has highlighted some of the achievements of the last two and a half years and the requirement for a United Nations role post-independence to the ensure the security and stability of the young Timorese Administration. I would like to elaborate further on the development and objectives of the plan for the successor mission that is presented in the Secretary-General's report dated 17 April 2002, which Council members have before them.

As Council members may recall, United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) administration of East Timor started with an almost exclusively international staff in October 1999. UNTAET then progressively transitioned into a shared international East Timorese Cabinet and Administration during the first Transitional Government. The Government of East Timor has been run for the past eight months by an all-Timorese Council of Ministers. The executive, legislative and judicial branches of Government are beginning to function, and East Timorese civil servants and line managers are now serving in all sectors. East Timorese police officers continue to be trained and to serve side by side with their United Nations counterparts. In short, there are now in East Timor the basic elements — although they are still fragile — of State and public administration.

To implement UNTAET's mandate, the United Nations had to adjust its way of doing business. We are grateful, in particular, for the flexibility that the General Assembly and its Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions have shown in allowing for the provision of central support services for government, such as information technology, telecommunications and district services.

Our procedures for recruiting international staff had to be changed in order to obtain personnel with the technical expertise and experience required to run a public administration. This has not been easy. There were initial shortcomings. Recruitment authority was eventually delegated to UNTAET, which allowed for direct consultations with senior Government officials on the recruitment of appropriate international staff.

Notwithstanding the significant progress made, certain elements set out in UNTAET's mandate have not yet been fully achieved. Government structures are not yet fully functional or financially sustainable. Significant benefits from the Timor Sea are projected to flow into the economy, but not until about three years from now. Until then, it is imperative that the international community continue to provide budgetary support to the young Timorese public Administration.

The plan for an integrated peacekeeping mission post-independence, to be known as the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), was developed over the past 12 months and draws on lessons learned from UNTAET and other missions. The most fundamental lesson is that, in order to have a lasting impact which makes the best use of limited resources, there must be a comprehensive benchmark-based strategy that must be implemented in a coherent manner and with a close partnership among the United Nations, Member States and our Timorese colleagues. With this in mind, UNTAET, together with the East Timorese, identified the requirements for 100 core functions to support the Government after independence, defined an exit strategy and took measures to enable recruitment against these functions by independence. Similarly, with respect to the police, we identified the requirements to develop a police structure based on the law enforcement needs and budgetary realities of East Timor, and we agreed with the Timorese leadership on a development plan that is linked to specific benchmarks and provides for a progressive reduction of United Nations police personnel.

As members of the Council are aware, President-elect Xanana Gusmão and Chief Minister Alkatiri recently wrote to you, Mr. President, requesting the establishment of a follow-on mission in East Timor and expressing their concurrence with the plan presented by the Secretary-General in his report.

As the Secretary-General has noted, the follow-on mission would support three areas that are critical for the stability and viability of an independent East Timor, namely public administration, law and order, and external security. The follow-on mission would be gradually withdrawn as East Timorese institutions develop the capability to carry the burden alone. The details of how this support is to be provided are included in the implementation plan presented in the report.

In the area of public administration, the mission would support critical Government functions through the provision of 100 international experts under the assessed budget. It is foreseen that the mission would

phase out this assistance in essential services and to the legal system by November 2003 and in financial and central services, as well as internal systems, by May 2004.

Continued civilian assistance will also be provided to bring to justice the perpetrators of serious crimes committed in 1999. Investigations into the priority cases are expected to be concluded by the end of the year, and the number of international investigators will be downsized accordingly. Prosecutors, however, will need to continue to be available as these cases proceed through the judicial system.

Regarding law and order, progress in the development of the East Timor Police Service has been impressive, and a total of 1,800 Timorese police officers have received basic training and are now working alongside their United Nations counterparts. Another 1,030 police officers are to be trained to reach the target strength of 2,830.

As requested by the East Timorese leadership, the United Nations police will continue to provide executive policing and to support the development of the East Timor Police Service. At independence, the United Nations plans to enter into a formal agreement with the Government on the operational arrangements for the police forces. These arrangements, which are currently being discussed with the Transitional Government, provide for the gradual handover of day-to-day policing responsibilities in the districts — subject, of course, to clearly defined criteria.

The first handover is scheduled to take place on Independence Day, on 20 May 2002, when an East Timorese district commander will assume responsibility for Aileu district. The final handover is expected to occur in January 2004, when the headquarters structure will be fully commanded by the East Timor Police Service. Until all 13 districts are handed over, all police officers, including East Timorese commanders at the district and unit level, will operate as a joint service under the command of the United Nations Police Commissioner, who will report to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. This will ensure a coherent police service, combining East Timorese and international police working side by side, that is able to operate smoothly and to discharge effectively its responsibilities for the maintenance of law and order.

The third area in which support will continue to be needed after independence is external security. The East Timor Defence Force is still in its early stages of development and subject to sustained bilateral support, it is not expected to attain full operational capability until January 2004. In the meantime, as requested by the East Timorese leadership, the United Nations will continue to be responsible for the maintenance of the external security and territorial integrity of East Timor. An agreement specifying the modalities for coordination between the United Nations peacekeeping forces and the East Timor Defence Force (ETDF) is in preparation and is also expected to be signed by the Government and the United Nations at the time of independence. As the East Timor Defence Force develops its operational capability, it will gradually take on responsibility for external security. However, it is expected that in the meantime United Nations and East Timorese military forces will operate under separate chains of command and areas of operation.

The Secretary-General's report provides a detailed plan to downsize the peacekeeping force in four phases, over a period of two years. Annex IV of the report shows the projected timeline according to which each phase will occur, subject to the attainment of certain predetermined benchmarks. In that regard, the timely conclusion of an agreement on the border between East Timor and Indonesia will be critical. Should such an agreement be reached, as we hope it will, before the end of 2002, it may even become possible to accelerate the downsizing of the force in the border area, as well as to accelerate the reduction of its overall strength.

However, I cannot emphasize enough that the material and financial support of bilateral donors for the full establishment of the East Timorese police and military are essential, and that they require urgent action. While training and governance mechanisms will be put in place with the support of the Mission, there will be a need to ensure that the police and military institutions of East Timor are adequately equipped and resourced through generous bilateral contributions. It must be understood that the timely implementation of the hand-over to the East Timorese police is linked to the logistical capabilities of the Timorese police and that increased donor support could allow the reduction to occur at a more rapid pace. The same logic of course applies to the ETDF.

In addition to assistance to police and military forces, there is a need for continued bilateral support to East Timor to strengthen the institutions and structures of Government and to put into effect the programme for the medium- and long-term development of the country. While the proposed Mission will focus its efforts on consolidating a stable environment in East Timor, there will be a continuing need for other United Nations entities, as well as bilateral and other donors, to assist the people of East Timor in developing a sustainable economy. The commitments made by Member States at the next donor conference, which is to be held in Dili on 14 and 15 May, will be essential to sustain and develop the existing basic administrative structures. We urge Member States to channel their assistance to support the 200 priority posts for social and economic development and poverty reduction, which will rely on voluntary contributions.

Considerable emphasis has been placed on coordinating the activities of the wider United Nations system, bilateral donors, civil society and the national development plan of the East Timor Government itself. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the implementation plan for UNMISET provides for close coordination of the United Nations family, including the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. To facilitate this coordination, it is envisaged that the Resident Coordinator will be appointed Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General — as has been done with some success elsewhere, such as in Sierra Leone, for example. That will ensure that the international community can maximize the benefits of its collective resources and will enable the United Nations gradually to transition from UNMISET into a role of traditional development assistance, over the two-year period proposed in the report.

In closing, and with the permission of the Secretary-General, I would like to pay tribute to all those who have been instrumental in allowing us to make the progress that has been achieved so far. Foremost in our minds, of course, are the East Timorese and their unflagging commitment and cooperation. In particular, I should recognize the extremely able leadership of President-elect Xanana Gusmão and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri and their colleagues in the Government and Constituent Assembly. Our deep gratitude also goes to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for his admirable leadership of UNTAET and for his dedication and hard work alongside the East Timorese people during the past two and a half years. Finally, last but not least, I would like to pay special tribute to all the staff of UNTAET and its partner organizations for their outstanding contribution in helping East Timor to overcome its tragic past and enabling it to join the community of nations and, soon, the United Nations Organization as a full member.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Annabi for his introduction.

I now give the floor to the President-elect of East Timor, His Excellency Mr. Xanana Gusmão.

Mr. Gusmão: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to address this important meeting devoted to East Timor. The Secretary-General has already presented a comprehensive review of the latest developments, and the Chief Minister, Mr. Mari Alkatiri, is also here to complement this report with an update.

Before talking about the current stage leading towards formal independence, allow me to touch on some earlier key events pertaining to the question of East Timor. They are well known to everyone here, of course, but I wish to briefly reflect on where we came from before we reached this phase, where formal independence is about to be granted.

The process towards a peaceful solution for East Timor was clearly defined 20 years ago, when the General Assembly adopted resolution 37/30, in 1982. The Secretary-General was given the authority to initiate the necessary measures, including calling upon all interested parties to work together towards the implementation of the spirit and the letter of the resolution.

After 18 years, in May 1999, the United Nations and the Governments of the Republic of Indonesia and the Portuguese Republic signed the 5 May accord. That accord enabled the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) to be set up to implement the first phase, which was the popular consultation held on 30 August 1999. The referendum finally allowed us to exercise our right to self-determination. As expected, our people opted overwhelmingly for independence, for freedom and for democracy. The 5 May accord envisaged that, regardless of the outcome of the vote,

the United Nations would take over administration of the territory.

The violence that followed the announcement of the results of the vote was beyond belief. As a nation and people, over a period of 24 years of occupation we endured extreme and systematic violence, but nothing prepared us for the violence of September 1999. Within a short period, people were killed and our country was looted and burned. Thousands of people fled from their villages and towns to the mountains, and many more were forced to cross the border into Indonesia.

For our people, that was an eclipse of freedom. The international community witnessed the violence and destruction and acted forcefully to stop it. We are particularly indebted to the Security Council and to all the countries that helped to take that decisive decision. The diplomatic and military actions taken by the international community proved to the world that it had the capacity to end widespread violence against a defenceless people. Through the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET), many countries came together under the overall command of Australia to help control the situation. Operation Stability was a success.

INTERFET was not envisaged in the 5 May accord, but it was necessary to save the accord itself. By doing so, it also helped to honour the responsibilities and the undertakings of the Government of Indonesia based on the 5 May accord. INTERFET allowed the second phase of the accord to be implemented. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was formed to carry out the second phase on behalf of the Security Council. With the support of the peacekeeping force, UNTAET's mandate was to create the democratic institutions of Government.

In the last two years, UNTAET has given primary emphasis to the maintenance of security and the establishment of the rule of law. The development of the East Timor Police Service and the East Timor Defence Force has been an extraordinary achievement. We are now certain that we are heading in the right direction, but we acknowledge that much more needs to be done, especially in the administration of justice.

Other areas of critical importance, such as education, health, agriculture and fisheries, still require strong support in terms of finance and human resources. The civil service is evolving, but many challenges still exist, especially at the senior level, in building the capacity of our people to maintain effective, transparent and accountable government.

We are now about to become independent. As reported by the Secretary-General, a constitution was adopted by an elected Constituent Assembly and, on the basis of that constitution, we have just held presidential elections. We now have the three basic institutions of sovereignty: the executive, the parliament and a president.

Our second Transitional Government was set up after the election of a Constituent Assembly on 30 August 2001. With very limited resources, the Government is likely to face extreme difficulties in implementing its programmes unless financial support and the appropriate expertise from the international community are forthcoming. The Chief Minister, Mr. Alkatiri, can explain the details of those matters. There is a plan to provide international experts for 100 core functions, which have been identified by UNTAET and the Government as critical to the viability of the Government and to political stability. That support is important.

The Government has been actively involved in the process of preparing the first national development plan for East Timor. Civil society has also been involved in that process through the Civil Society Consultative Commission, which administered a countrywide consultation. The aim of the consultation was to ensure that the national development plan would reflect the needs and aspirations of our people. I was personally involved in the exercise, as the Head of the Commission. That particular exercise enabled almost 40,000 people to participate directly in planning for the future. They presented their own vision and expectations and outlined their own priorities. The report on the aspirations and priorities identified by the people is now in the hands of the Government. Education and health were identified as areas of major concern and will be at the top of the list of priorities.

The development plan will be released before independence. It will be an important document not only to guide the Government and civil society in developing the nation, but also to guide the international community on how best it can continue to help us support our major goals of reducing poverty and promoting economic and social development.

We now have a constitution. It provides guarantees of human rights for our people. In terms of the philosophy of the United Nations, our constitution provides an example of how the fundamental elements of human rights can be incorporated into a constitution. For a nation in the making, delivering those guarantees to individuals and to the nation is a gigantic challenge.

How are we going to respond to the basic needs of our people in terms of employment, basic health and the right to education? How are we going to respond to basic human rights in terms of employment, working conditions and equal opportunities for both genders? How are we going to nurture and sustain integrated democratic processes? Those are all real challenges, not only for us, the Timorese, but also for the United Nations.

Our struggle for freedom was a litmus test for the process of resolving conflict through peaceful means. Our freedom, won through years of sustained resistance on many fronts and finally becoming a reality through the 5 May accord, was sealed in the ballot box in the popular consultation held on 30 August 1999. That was a turning point in our history. I wish to reiterate the fact that the successful implementation of the popular consultation was a product of the United Nations working creatively with the people of East Timor. The commitment of the entire Security Council to East Timor and the personal commitment of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, were certainly a force in that process. Our people will never forget the Council's help.

The experience of the administration of UNTAET holds rich lessons for the future. Future United Nations administrations in post-conflict situations will be much richer if the lessons from East Timor are incorporated into the design and implementation of United Nations plans.

The successor mission, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), has a mandate-implementation plan with defined benchmarks to be achieved within a certain time frame. For this plan to succeed, it will need the support of Member States. We welcome those plans and shall work together to make sure that the objectives assigned to the successor Mission will be successfuliy implemented.

The building of democratic institutions has also been a process led by the United Nations through UNTAET, working with the Timorese leadership, as envisaged in the Security Council resolutions. So far, it has been a success.

The challenge now for the Timorese, and also for the United Nations, is how to consolidate the core democratic institutions. The need to enhance the capacity and transparency of political institutions and of the administrative apparatus is a critical challenge. Appropriate development in the areas of law and order is another. To maintain and sustain security and stability, which are the most important conditions for national development and democracy, are two intertwined processes that must be carefully nurtured.

We will face a real test after the declaration of independence on 20 May. That is when capacity-building begins in earnest. A central issue is how are we going to manage the legislature in order to elaborate laws to regulate an environment conducive to sustaining economic development. The other real challenge is how the United Nations and the people of East Timor can continue to work together in the post-independence era to enhance the capacity of the institutions of East Timor after it becomes a democratic State. Support from the international community, including technical advisers to support key Government functions, will be essential for some time to come.

In short, our struggle for freedom and independence evolved from the cold-war era into the new millennium. Our independence is the product of the sustained determination of our people, combined with active cooperation with the international community at all levels. Our future success will also depend on the continuation of that determination and cooperation. I appeal to the Security Council and to the Secretary-General to continue to support us in the challenging years ahead. Our success is your success. For our part, as a people and a nation that emerged from the ashes to look forward to becoming a State Member of the United Nations, we shall continue to embrace the principles of human rights, mutual respect, good citizenship and cooperation at all levels between States and peoples. Our actions will always be oriented towards sustained peace and stability. Those are the best assets we have.

Lastly but not least, I should like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his personal commitment over many years to helping us, as a people and a nation, to succeed in the struggle for peace and freedom.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to Mr. Mari Alkatiri, Chief Minister of East Timor.

Mr. Alkatiri: After a quarter of a century of struggle and resistance, we are now only 23 days from achieving our objective, the international recognition of the independence of East Timor. That it will be achieved on 20 May is a tribute not only to our people and their contributions to the process, but also to the international community and the United Nations, which kept the idea of an independent East Timor alive in the darkest hour of the struggle.

The support of the Security Council has been fundamental over the past two and a half years, as the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the people of East Timor worked together to restore security and stability and to establish the foundation of an independent Government. It was not always easy, as there was no blueprint or manual on how to govern a country. We learned as we went along.

Now, however, we are at a stage in which East Timor is ready to govern itself. Since September 2001, an entirely East Timorese Government has been exercising executive authority, and while we are facing a major challenge to develop our public and private institutions as well as their social and communitarian counterparts, the fundamental structures and institutions of the country are now in place. Government and civil society have been working hard together to produce our first national plan, with the objective of establishing a programme to alleviate poverty and promote the development of East Timor. We have a clear idea of our priorities after the broad public consultation that preceded our planning process and the open Cabinet meetings that the Council of Ministers has been conducting in each of the 13 districts of East Timor, at which the population was able to express its concerns directly to the Government. We are concerned that our style of governance should be seen not only as representative — inasmuch as we are the elected representatives of the people — but also as participatory, in order to directly involve the people in the decision-making process.

The present leadership of the country has a duty to live up to two major expectations. The first is the expectation of the people that the Government will channel their energies and creative ability into the development of the country. The second is the expectation of the international community that the Government will do all it can to convert the aid being provided into investments that will benefit future generations and thus increase the credibility of the country, so that it can continue to deserve the confidence and support of the international community.

As a result of the consultation process, Government attention will be concentrated on four major areas.

First, education and the eradication of illiteracy, which currently stands at around 55 per cent, are priorities.

Second is health, with particular emphasis on the fight against malnutrition and endemic diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, as well as the provision of the basics of public health, including clean water and sanitation. Another priority is the campaign that has already started for AIDS awareness and education.

Third is housing, which is another priority.

Fourth is agriculture and its development potential. This is particularly important in order to halt the exodus of the rural population to the city and, indeed, to reverse that trend.

Our budget will be a clear reflection of those priorities, which were identified in the national plan, with a particular emphasis on service delivery and the alleviation of poverty. The final budget will be approved on 30 May.

I should also like to mention that the President-elect, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and I had a long and fruitful meeting recently, and we are in broad agreement on how to go forward. The President-elect and I share the same objectives — the well-being and advancement of the people of East Timor — and we will work together with the presidency, the Government and Parliament to achieve those goals. We will, however, still be relying on the support of the United Nations and of the international community to consolidate the progress that has been

made thus far and to guarantee the stability of the country after independence. I am referring to the need for assessed funding for the 100 core functions that are vital for the continued functioning of the Government, and for donor funding for the 200 additional functions that were identified, with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as necessary for social and economic development and poverty reduction.

In order to implement the national development plan, international support is critical over the next three years until the first revenues can be expected from the gas and petroleum developments in the Timor Sea. Those revenues will be considered as a credit by future generations of East Timor to the current generation, which will be paid back by a special development fund for education, health and infrastructure.

We will be applying to join the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and our application to the International Monetary Fund is currently being processed. We are working closely with the World Bank to establish a mechanism to channel donor funds to a budget support facility that will help to bridge the gap between budget expenditures and forecast revenues over the next three years. We are actively engaged with the Australian Government and the oil companies operating in the Timor Sea to resolve outstanding issues, and we expect to sign the treaty relating to the area of cooperation upon independence or shortly thereafter.

But these measures to ensure political and economic stability go hand in hand with the question of internal and external security. The East Timor defence and police forces are not yet ready to undertake those functions, and there will be a need for a continued United Nations presence with an executive role in those two areas. We are aware of the importance of signing the Status of Forces/Status of Mission agreement (SOFA/SOMA) and the agreements on police and military responsibilities. Those are of fundamental importance in defining the coordination between the Government and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the new mission, in order to avoid the danger of parallel command structures in the same country.

The security of our country is also linked to the establishment of good relations with our neighbours and, indeed, with all the nations of the world. One important step will be the negotiation of our maritime boundaries. Budget restrictions will, of necessity limit our diplomatic representations, but we encourage diplomats to visit East Timor and see for themselves the challenges that exist for the future, as well as the considerable progress that has already been made with the generous assistance of United Nations Members. We are aware that various countries have expressed an interest in establishing diplomatic relations with East Timor on Independence Day and we are studying how it will be humanly possible to bring this about in the time that it is available.

To conclude, our priorities are to ensure that the Government's programmes and policies reflect the aspirations of our people and are executed with the maximum efficiency and transparency and to maintain the high standards of human and social rights that were instituted during the transition period, counting on the active participation and support of civil society. Of particular significance will be the continuing promotion of equality and women's rights and the campaign against domestic violence. Our priorities are also to plan for integrated and sustainable development, with the help of the United Nations agencies, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; to consolidate the very real advances that have been made over the past two and a half years, with special emphasis on capacity and institution-building; and to encourage a spirit of tolerance and reconciliation within the community, allied to the application of economic, social and political justice.

I would like to confirm our full support for the Secretary-General's recommendations for the successor mission and commit my Government to working closely with the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General to make that new mission as much a success as UNTAET.

We have come a long way together during East Timor's transition to independence and special thanks are due to the Security Council for its continued support; to the Secretary-General who, in spite of his heavy load of responsibilities, has always been available for advice and consultation; and, of course, to our friend Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello, who has worked tirelessly on behalf of the people of East Timor.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Chief Minister of East Timor for his kind words addressed to the Security Council.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Let me start by thanking Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing on the situation in East Timor and for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the important statement he made earlier this morning.

We are very pleased to welcome once again Mr. Xanana Gusmão — this time as the first President-elect of East Timor — and Chief Minister Mari Alkatari to the Security Council. We thank them for their statements outlining the policies that they will be following to address the immediate needs of their country. Let me also seize this opportunity to congratulate them on their election and to express our best wishes to them and to the entire population that they are going to be leading. The election held this month shows once again the political maturity of the people, their love of peace and democracy and their undivided commitment to East Timor's future.

We are very happy to see the positive developments in almost all sectors in East Timor. This is a sure and steady path in the process to independence. The success registered so far in the making of East Timor as a nation State is the outcome of the indomitable and undying spirit of sacrifice and dedication of its people and that of the international community, particularly the Security Council, which has engaged itself fully in the whole process from the very beginning.

The progress achieved should now be consolidated and the international community should continue to accompany East Timor in its efforts. East Timor will require a sustained and high level of development assistance, as mentioned in paragraph 100 of the Secretary-General's report. Top priority should be given to external security, law and order and the establishment of a solid and representative administrative service. We must therefore ensure that the needed help is given, especially in order to maintain the high level of security and to build a sustainable administrative and economic base.

In this context, we fully support the proposal of the Secretary-General on the establishment of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), with the responsibilities outlined in paragraph 64 of the report. We particularly appreciate the idea of a gradual devolution of responsibilities and powers to the people of East Timor in all sectors. This is the most pragmatic and realizable objective in the particular situation.

The significant role played by Indonesia in the peace process and its continued support for all United Nations activities in East Timor must be highly commended. We are confident that both Indonesia and East Timor will continue to consult each other in addressing the outstanding issues. We encourage both countries to develop close, friendly and good-neighbourly relations that will permit regional stability and the optimal utilization of resources for the benefit of their respective peoples.

We look forward to East Timor's joining the family of the United Nations after acceding to formal independence on 20 May, a celebration which the whole world will be watching with great interest, joy and emotion. Let me say that Mauritius will be represented at that special and historic event.

Before I conclude, allow me to express my appreciation to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, who is not among us today, for the outstanding work accomplished by him in East Timor as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the Transitional Administration. His contribution in bringing peace to East Timor will become part of the history of the country. He and the entire staff of UNTAET deserve our heartiest appreciation for their laudable work in East Timor. We wish him plenty of success in his future undertakings.

I also take this opportunity to convey my congratulations to Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, Permanent Representative of India, who will now head UNMISET and who, no doubt, has a gigantic task ahead. We are confident, however, that, with his experience and great leadership qualities, he will be able to meet the challenges. Mauritius, as ever, will continue to lend its support to him and to the people of East Timor in building a viable and peace-loving State.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is very gratified to be here in the Security Council at this extremely important moment in the history of East Timor. Allow me to thank the Secretary-General for having addressed us on this historic occasion as we welcome Mr. Xanana Gusmão, President-elect of East Timor, and thank him and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri for their enlightening statements.

We anticipate with great enthusiasm the company of East Timor as a State Member of the United Nations. We are grateful to the Secretariat for the report and to Mr. Annabi for his introduction.

Today's meeting is particularly meaningful. We are celebrating the culmination of a historic process that began over two years ago in great uncertainty and amid multiple political difficulties. We are now seeing the onset of a new phase that will be equally decisive for East Timor's history, but that can be launched without the fears of the past. On 20 May, the date of independence for that new country and of the installation of the new Government, the Timorese and the international community will set out on a path that can be successfully completed only if we jointly reaffirm our decisive support.

Colombia welcomes the independence of East Timor. This has crystallized the supreme exercise of the right of the Timorese to self-determination, a fundamental principle for peaceful coexistence among peoples. We recognize the transcendent importance of this moment, and we expect to participate in the ceremonies planned in Dili on 19 and 20 May.

On earlier occasions we examined in some detail the Secretary-General's proposals to define the United Nations presence after independence. We agree with the guidelines presented in the report being considered today, including the mandate for the new United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). We would like to make a few general comments on areas of particular interest to Colombia.

First, we are in favour of the gradual manner in which the transition from the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to UNMISET has been planned. This is a fundamental element in guaranteeing that the new Timorese State is economically and politically sustainable in the long term.

Secondly, we believe that the structure that has been planned for bringing about security and stability in the new country is appropriate. We feel that the planned linkage between UNMISET and the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Representative of the United Nations Development Programme is a positive element and will make it possible to harmonize and unify the United Nations contribution to the new Government's development plans, bearing in mind security aspects.

Thirdly, we would like to emphasize that starting on 20 May, the Security Council will have a different role to play in determining East Timor's path. From now on, aside from the Timorese, of course, the most active role will be taken by other agencies of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and bilateral donors that decide to commit resources to the new country. The challenge for the new actors will be to provide the Government of East Timor with a sustainable, genuine, harmonized, coordinated and coherent contribution to development.

We would like to commend particularly the countries that have played a fundamental part in the recent history of this new country. I am referring, for instance, to the Governments of Portugal and Australia, and others whose direct participation has had a decisive impact in installing democracy in East Timor in safe conditions. We would also like to recognize the Government of Indonesia for having shown positive political will in cooperating with programmes for border security, humanitarian assistance and refugee return.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Sergio Vieira de Mello, the outgoing Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his contribution to the Timorese people and for having shown that the United Nations can be successful when the right conditions and sufficient political will exist. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Kamalesh Sharma on his appointment to lead the new Mission of Support. We are all familiar with his intellectual and professional abilities, and that is why we are sure that his management will be very successful.

Mr. Williamson (United States): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing. I welcome President-elect Gusmão and Chief Minister Alkatiri, and on behalf of the United States

Government I would like to congratulate Mr. Gusmão for his electoral victory and both of them for making East Timor's transition to democracy and independence a model of peace, hopefulness and success.

The most important thing now is to consolidate gains and avoid instability in the next phase. For these reasons, we endorse the recommendations in the Secretary-General's recent report and expect to support a resolution establishing the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) soon, and certainly before independence.

To ensure that, I encourage our East Timor colleagues and the United Nations to finalize the memorandums which will govern the command-and-control relationships between United Nations peacekeepers and police and their East Timor counterparts and institutions. We support the maximum level of coordination and cooperation while preserving the usual prerogatives, privileges and immunities. We hope that the United Nations and the East Timor Government will be looking for ways to accelerate the proposed downsizing and devolution to leave East Timor master of its own fate as soon as possible while acknowledging the need to move judiciously to avoid destabilization.

Secretary-General Annan has chosen our colleague, the Indian Permanent Representative Mr. Sharma, to be the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General upon the establishment of UNMISET. We encourage the leaders of East Timor to work closely with him and with the United Nations leadership on the peacekeeping forces and the civilian political side of the implementation plan for the successor mission.

The Secretary-General's report talks specifically about the development needs of the East Timor Defence Force and the East Timor Police Service. We have provided personnel and trainers to both the Defence Force and the Police Service, and we expect to continue those services after independence. Furthermore, we recently started a logistics contract that is providing crucial support to the Defence Force in both Lospalos and Metinaro. We would join the Secretary-General in noting how important the development of these two institutions will be for East Timor's future and in urging yet more countries, some of which had constraints before East Timor became independent, to look at providing assistance.

The Secretary-General's information about slow progress in the judicial sector raises concern. The United States has provided substantial assistance in that area, and we have approved another $600,000 worth of projects on the justice/accountability issue alone for the current year. Our justice-oriented grants to East Timor since 1999 have totalled more than $13.5 million. We encourage East Timor to make progress in this critical sector a priority.

The Secretary-General's report provides welcome detail on how UNMISET and the East Timorese Government will coordinate with international financial institutions and bilateral donors. We have always believed that the United Nations cannot, and indeed should not, be the only game in town. We encourage prompt implementation of, and full attention to, these coordination mechanisms.

Bilaterally, the United States plans to establish diplomatic relations with East Timor immediately after independence. We will speak more about our donor plans during the upcoming Dili conference. But I want to reassure the Council that the United States remains committed to East Timor. From 1999 to the present, we have committed nearly $180 million in bilateral assistance for East Timor, independent of our contributions to United Nations peacekeeping. We have allocated more than $26 million in bilateral assistance to East Timor this fiscal year, which for us began September 2001.

Even as we prepare to approve a further two-year United Nations presence, the United States continues to believe that a good definition of success in East Timor will be when the last United Nations peacekeepers leave and an independent and stable East Timor stands up on its own. To get there, the United Nations and the East Timorese will need to work with the widest range of bilateral donors and interested agencies to ensure that as the extraordinary measures, from finance through peacekeeping, progressively diminish to nothing within two years, other appropriate mechanisms of support are in place.

We have previously urged that the East Timorese help this process by avoiding political infighting, focusing on a democratic, peaceful way forward, practising fiscal strictness and programme rigour, and capturing as much as the United Nations and others can teach, and quickly, in setting the right priorities. I will repeat those urgings, because I have two such

important East Timorese leaders alongside me. We will also continue to encourage the United Nations to stay on schedule with the downsizing it has set for itself, progressively devolving responsibility to increasingly capable East Timor institutions. When we have that, we can truly talk about a United Nations success story. The United States expects to participate in the East Timor independence ceremony.

I cannot finish today without expressing for the record the appreciation of the United States for the outstanding work of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and the UNTAET team. It is appropriate that we hear East Timorese voices today as we talk about the future, but it is equally appropriate that we commend and thank the Secretary-General's Special Representative for his hard work over the last two and one half years.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I would like to join the Secretary-General in welcoming here today President-elect Xanana Gusmão and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri.

As Kofi Annan said, today is indeed an emotional moment. Those of us — and there are lots around this table today — who have been personally involved with East Timor over the last three years can only watch with admiration the progress that the people of East Timor have made. I think we should also record with admiration the assistance that has been given to them by the international community in making that progress. I am sure that Sir Jeremy Greenstock, who participated in the first Security Council mission to East Timor but who is in the United Kingdom today, would want me to repeat those sentiments on his behalf.

This meeting should not be an occasion for long statements. In any case, I associate myself with the statement that will be made by Spain later in the debate on behalf of the European Union. But there are a few points I would like to make.

First, it is vital that the international community remain engaged in East Timor to support this fledgling nation in the early stages of independence. This support will be particularly vital in the defence, security and justice sectors. The United Kingdom strongly supports the Secretary-General's recommendation to establish the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) for an initial period of 12 months. We will shortly be circulating a draft resolution to members of the Council putting that — I hope — into effect soon.

We welcome the appointment of Mr. Roque Rodrigues as the new Secretary of State for Defence. We hope that this will pave the way for the early signature of the status of forces agreement and agreement as soon as possible on the command authority arrangements which will exist after independence. These should, of course, follow standard United Nations practice. I was very heartened to hear Chief Minister Alkatiri register his Government's interest in seeing a very early conclusion to that negotiation.

It is also imperative that quick decisions be made to complete the process of financing and recruiting personnel for the 100 core civilian posts for the follow-on mission.

The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation will play a vital role in independent East Timor and will relieve pressure on the formal justice system. We have already heard from Assistant Secretary-General Annabi about those pressures. The United Kingdom has committed more than $450,000.00 to the Commission, but we have serious concerns about the lack of progress so far. It is vital that the work of the Commission is speeded up.

United Kingdom support for East Timor will continue after independence. We have committed £12 million, or about $18 million, to support the implementation of a sound national development plan. We look forward to receiving details of the national development plan at the donor meeting in Dili on 14 and 15 May. United Kingdom funds will be provided as budgetary support. Their release will be conditional on the development of a mechanism to manage budgetary support from donors.

The Secretary-General reminded us of the importance of the newly independent East Timor developing and maintaining good relations with its neighbours. In this context, we welcome the announcement that President Megawati Soekarnoputri of Indonesia intends to visit East Timor for the independence celebrations. This will be a symbolically important step towards the development of a more mature relationship between the two countries. For the United Kingdom's part, Mr. Ben Bradshaw, the Foreign Office Minister for Southeast Asia, will attend the celebrations on 19 and 20 May. The United Kingdom

will also upgrade its mission in Dili to an embassy after independence.

I should not conclude without a word of heartfelt thanks to Sergio Vieira de Mello for all that he has done as the Secretary-General's Special Representative in East Timor over the last two years. It is very good news that Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, who has been a most distinguished member of the community of Permanent Representatives here, has been appointed as the new Special Representative for East Timor. We hope that the post of Resident Coordinator, who will double as Deputy Special Representative, will be filled as soon as possible to allow for a smooth hand-over of responsibilities from the old team to the new one.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), and Mr. Hédi Annabi for his introduction of the report.

I wish to warmly welcome the participation of President-elect Gusmão and Chief Minister Alkatiri in the debate. We are happy to have them with us today.

As a country associated with the European Union, Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement that will be made soon by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make a few brief comments in my national capacity.

On behalf of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, I wish to warmly congratulate President-elect Gusmão on his election as the first President of East Timor. The presidential election is an auspicious prelude to the independence that will be proclaimed on 20 May 2002 in Dili. My delegation was very satisfied with the peaceful and transparent holding of the election. Bulgaria highly appreciates the efforts and the activities of President-elect Gusmão and the political leadership of East Timor that is aimed at anchoring democratic and human rights principles and practices in the political life of the young country.

In this context, Bulgaria commends the outstanding results of UNTAET's work and wishes to thank once again the Special Representative and Transitional Administrator, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for his remarkable work. My country welcomes the Secretary-General's proposals to continue providing United Nations support in the country's post-independence period.

We would like to draw attention to the need to resolve two problems that are important to the stability of the new State and the region as a whole. The first is the need to accelerate the border demarcation process. Beginning the land border demarcation process will contribute to resolving problems linked to security. Secondly, we would like the United Nations to continue working to bring about a return of refugees, including in the period after independence has been declared.

Bulgaria hopes that international assistance to East Timor will not suddenly drop off after independence has been declared. On the contrary, assistance should be provided in such a way as to enable the country to develop a viable economy and its own sources of income so that its people can enjoy a decent standard of living.

The integration of the country into the international community and, in particular, into the economic and political structures of the region is of crucial importance. In this context, we welcome the trilateral consultations that took place in February between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Indonesia and Australia, as well as the agreements that were signed to improve relationships with neighbouring countries.

The forthcoming declaration of Timorese independence will be one of the great success stories of our Organization and the international community as whole. We believe that the United Nations Mission has been able to create such a positive model for the peacekeeping activities of the Organization.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the positive part played by Australia and Portugal in achieving this result. We are also gratified that the President of Indonesia, Ms. Megawati Soekarnoputri, will attend the independence ceremony. This augurs well for the development of positive bilateral relations between those two countries.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): It is not customary for the Secretary-General to appear at regular reviews of the East Timor issue; I think his presence here earlier this morning was a very powerful demonstration of the strong support that he and the United Nations have given East Timor — support which has, frankly, brought us to the relatively happy situation that we have today.

Perhaps nothing illustrates this better than the presence in the Council today of Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. Mari Alkatiri, and we welcome them here. We also thank them for their candid and enlightening statements. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Gusmão personally for his overwhelming victory in the elections for the first President of independent East Timor, and we welcome the commitment of the East Timorese leaders to work together. One clear demonstration of this is the letter that Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Alkatiri sent to the President of the Security Council requesting the Council to authorize a continued peacekeeping presence in East Timor. The Security Council should respond positively to that letter, for, as Mr. Gusmão said earlier, "Our success is your success".

By helping East Timor, the United Nations is, indeed, helping itself, because it is consolidating a major success story. It is unfortunate that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, is not here to receive the well-deserved tributes that have been paid to him this morning. Success was not guaranteed when Mr. Vieira de Mello arrived in East Timor; indeed, the odds were stacked against him. This makes his success even more remarkable. We also want to join our colleagues in congratulating Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma on his appointment. We note that he is a very tall man, with a very distinguished record in public service; but I think he should know that he will have some big shoes to fill when he goes to East Timor.

We also want to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for introducing the Secretary-General's report and for his comprehensive briefing. Once again, the Secretary-General has produced another excellent report on East Timor; it provides an insightful analysis of the situation of East Timor just before its independence on 20 May.

We are all well aware of the progress that East Timor has made in the past two and a half years. In paragraph 2 of his report in document S/2002/432, the Secretary-General described it as moving

> "from widespread devastation to the establishment of the foundations for the administration of a new country and to the rehabilitation of a basic infrastructure that can support economic and social activity."

At the same time, the Secretary-General is also spot-on in highlighting, in paragraph 3 of the report, that

> "a number of issues that present challenges to the short- and longer-term security and stability of the new State have not yet and could not have been fully resolved. These range from border demarcation, return of refugees and regulation of commercial activity in the border area, to strengthening of nascent governmental structures, including law enforcement and the judicial system, as well as the consolidation of the framework for economic and social development."

The Secretary-General concludes that

> "It is therefore essential for the international community to remain engaged in East Timor for some time beyond independence, to ensure stability and to build upon the achievements of UNTAET."

We are pleased that a strong consensus is developing within the Council that we, the Council members, should support the recommendations of the Secretary-General; that has clearly been demonstrated in all the statements that we have heard so far.

The picture is plain for all of us to see. While East Timor has made significant progress, we cannot, as of now, say that it will be a viable nation State immediately on independence. The lesson of the history of the past few decades is relatively clear: independence, even if it comes after a hard-fought struggle, may still be a relatively easy victory. Success after independence, unfortunately, has been relatively rare.

There is therefore a great deal more for the United Nations and the international community to do to help East Timor to fully get on its feet. The actors who have brought East Timor to where it is today should not shy away from the responsibility of continuing their support for the leaders and people of East Timor as they work to build a viable and sustainable State. This will, of course, include the maintenance by the United Nations of a strong peacekeeping presence to consolidate and strengthen stability in post-independence East Timor, as well as the presence of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and bilateral and other donors to provide

assistance for further building up East Timor's economic and social structures.

The dangers of premature withdrawal and disengagement from East Timor are too serious for such a move even to be contemplated. East Timor could unravel, and all its achievements and the investments made by the international community would go to waste. The fragility of East Timor should not be underestimated. As the saying goes, "Prevention is better than cure" — and it is certainly much less costly.

Peace and stability in East Timor is also crucial for the peace and stability of the entire region; they are closely intertwined. How the United Nations and the international community handle East Timor will have repercussions for the region as a whole. A viable and secure East Timor will contribute to the stability of the region and help it in its efforts to consolidate its new-found independence. Clearly the whole region has a stake in East Timor's success.

The Secretary-General has also made a very strong case in his report, in great detail, for the proposed mandate, structure, size and planned reconfiguration of the United Nations successor peacekeeping mission in East Timor after independence. The mission is appropriately called United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

It is noteworthy that the Secretary-General has not only maintained the proposals that had been gathered in support by the Security Council in its presidential statement of October 2001, but he has also added important flesh to the bones. The details contained in his report show the amount of meticulous effort that has gone into the planning of UNMISET, and all those involved should be commended and congratulated.

To the Secretary-General's credit, it is hard to see how his proposals can be faulted for the lack of any necessary details. Each of his proposals has been more than adequately justified. What remains is for the Security Council to give its unanimous endorsement of UNMISET, as proposed by the Secretary-General, to fulfil the mandate and key programmes required. In a nutshell, it is a Mission with a civilian component that includes a Civilian Support Group of 100 core functions and a Serious Crimes Unit; a military component of 5,000 troops; and a civilian police component of 1,250 officers at the very start, which will be gradually downsized over a two-year period, according to a milestone-based approach.

But there is one other important point that we would like to stress this morning. The drawdown of UNMISET should be based on the realities of the situation on the ground, and not carried out mechanically according to some abstract timetable. We cannot tell the future as we sit here. We cannot tell what the situation will be like in East Timor or in its vicinity a year from now. We should be sensitive and flexible as we work on the continued commitment of the United Nations to East Timor.

There is no doubt that a significant United Nations security presence is essential in post-independence East Timor. While the security environment continues to improve, internal and external threats to East Timor still exist. Come independence, East Timor will be — and this is natural — a fledgling democracy. There is every potential for domestic law and order as well as external security problems to arise.

The East Timor Defence Force and the East Timor Police Service are still in their infancy and will, quite naturally, take some time to become fully operational. This process will be even lengthier if international material and financial support for their full establishment is not forthcoming. Scaling down the United Nations military and civilian police presence too quickly therefore could entail the serious risk of jeopardizing the stability and security that has been achieved due precisely to such a presence. Indeed, it is not inconceivable that those who are intent on mischief could be lying low until the United Nations reduces its security presence.

As such, downsizing the United Nations military and police presence, on the basis of clear benchmarks, is the only appropriate approach to take. We believe that the Security Council should particularly bear in mind the important benchmark of the demarcation of the border and the establishment of an effective border control system.

The requirement for a Civilian Support Group of 100 core positions to be included in the civilian component of the following United Nations peacekeeping operation is also well justified. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, these core functions are critical to the viability of the Government, political

stability and the provision of basic services. We note also that Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Alkatiri, in the letter that they both sent, also highlighted the importance of these 100 civilian posts.

The first few years of any nation are a testing time. Hence, while the United Nations should not continue its Transitional Administration role in East Timor after independence, it is critical that the United Nations continue to provide the assistance necessary to ensure the sustainability of the administrative institutions and the completion of the required tasks.

When all is said and done, what the Security Council must do — and this is our obligation — is to give its clear endorsement of the recommendations of the Secretary-General for the establishment of UNMISET. This is a historic opportunity for the Council to reaffirm its pledge to make East Timor a real success story. We all know that this means a continuing strong United Nations presence and engagement in post-independence East Timor.

Often questions are asked about the value of having open debates in this chamber such as the one we are having today. But if the result of this morning's discussion is to redouble the commitment of the Council to ensuring the success of East Timor, then I would say that the debate that we have been having this morning has indeed been a very valuable exercise.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform participants that we will be meeting until 1 p.m., at which point the meeting will be suspended. It will be resumed at the beginning of next week.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): In the first hour of 20 May 2002, the flag of the United Nations will be lowered in East Timor and the flag of a new nation raised as a new country attains independence. That ceremony of transition will be the culmination of a tremendous effort carried out by the people of East Timor and by the international community.

This has been a successful experience, and it is cause for rejoicing on the part of the United Nations. In the difficult times now facing the international community, when violence and unyielding opposition in other regions are posing tremendous challenges for the United Nations — challenges that it must overcome in order to maintain its credibility — world public opinion views East Timor as a success story that has brought to life the goals and aspirations embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegations would like to welcome the President-elect of East Timor, Mr. Xanana Gusmão, and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri. In doing so, my country would like to pay tribute to the people of East Timor for the broad participation and smooth conduct of the presidential elections held on 14 April last, which represented the last stage before the declaration of independence. I would also like to express my country's support for the new authorities in discharging all of the tasks that still remain before them.

The path that has been travelled was beset with anguish; at times it was bloody, but ultimately our efforts were crowned with success. Nevertheless, the task remaining is an even greater one — the construction of an independent nation that will be a viable member of the international community. The task remains to consolidate the public administration and to train the staff in the judiciary, so as to ensure justice and the rule of law for the inhabitants and citizens of East Timor. Land ownership will also have to be regulated, for this will make economic activity much easier, and, equally important, it will also attract foreign investment to promote social development.

The reintegration of the former combatants is also an important element. Their access to public assistance programmes must be facilitated. My country attaches equal importance to the return of refugees and to their resettlement, to the regulation of commercial activity in the border areas, to transport agreements between Dili and Oecussi and between Dili and the island of Atauro, as well as to the establishment of a framework for cooperation in different fields that will redound to the benefit of the friendship between East Timor and other peoples.

My country would like to express its gratitude to United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for the important role it played throughout the process of achieving independence. I would also like to convey special thanks and tribute to the head of the mission, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for his efforts as leader. We wish him success in his new endeavours.

The inclusion in the new mission of civil, police and military components that will be reduced as the goals and objectives are attained properly reflects the vision expressed on many occasions with regard to

designing appropriate exit strategies, and it includes the concept of strategic association between all United Nations bodies and the new authorities of East Timor. As we have said before, we fully support the mandate and structure proposed by the Secretariat, including extending assistance to East Timor to consolidate the country's stability and the viability of its public administration. We fully support also the establishment of a law-enforcement body, which will conduct its activities in keeping with international human rights standards, and contributions to maintaining internal and external security. These are fundamental tasks that will be taken over by the East Timor Defence Force in June 2004.

Similarly, I would like to wish success to the new head of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, whose well-known ability leads us to have full confidence in the success of his mission.

To the recently elected authorities of East Timor, I would like to convey Mexico's commitment to continue to support efforts to consolidate the new State. Several Mexicans have already worked with the Independent Electoral Commission to train personnel. That Commission is now ready to take charge of future elections. Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute also provided some material assistance to the electoral process through the United Nations.

Mexico will continue to explore ways of cooperating with the authorities of East Timor and will support the efforts of the United Nations. We undertake this commitment so that my country's experience in various development areas may help achieve the aspiration of the inhabitants of East Timor to an independent, free and prosperous country. The donors' meeting to be held shortly will be attended by a representative of Mexico and will be an excellent opportunity to remind the international community of the need to support economic and social development, reduce poverty, and guarantee the independence and self-determination of East Timor. We hope to be present on 20 May to celebrate the proclamation of independence with the people of East Timor.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to associate ourselves with the previous speakers in warmly congratulating the President-elect of East Timor, Mr. Xanana Gusmão, and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and the comprehensive and detailed report he has presented on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). We would also like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his comprehensive presentation this morning. Of course, we cannot fail to pay tribute to the efforts by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, his team and the entire staff of UNTAET in East Timor. I would also like very sincerely to congratulate our brother Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, who will be leading the future successor mission to UNTAET. We are all familiar with his ability, wisdom, and competency. We wish him every success in carrying out this happy mission for the East Timorese people.

The success achieved by the United Nations in arriving where we are today in East Timor should not preclude our understanding that the task is not yet complete. There remains a great deal to be done in terms of providing support to that country. In that connection, we must commend the Special Committee on Decolonization, which worked hard for many years to bring about the independence of East Timor, for its contribution.

My delegation is also pleased to note the progress achieved as described in the report of the Secretary-General, in particular with regard to consolidating the political and institutional structures of the new State. That progress is reflected in the adoption of the constitution, the election of the first President and the devolution of many executive functions to the people of East Timor. The international community must continue to follow developments in post-independence East Timor in order to guarantee stability and to consolidate the achievements of the Transitional Administration.

Preparations are under way for the celebration of Independence Day on 20 May 2002, the historic occasion when the flag of East Timor will be raised and when the new President will take up his functions. It is worth mentioning that once East Timor enjoys security and stability, it will make an important contribution to the stability of the entire region and will complement the efforts made by the region to overcome the political and economic problems it now faces. We must therefore view the start of bilateral and trilateral discussions between East Timor, Indonesia and Australia against the background of the satisfaction expressed by the Secretary-General at those talks. We

feel that a close dialogue of this type must be pursued for the sake of promoting friendship among these countries in the future. We greatly appreciate the words we heard this morning regarding the participation of the President of friendly Indonesia in the dialogue, as her participation is extremely significant.

My delegation supports the mandate, plan, principles and operational elements proposed in the report for the successor mission. As for the role of the United Nations in the post-independence period, we must emphasize the need to continue providing development assistance and to provide all the necessary support in the first three years after independence. That will be necessary to create in East Timor a police force and a defence force able to fully defend East Timor and insure stability and prospects for a better future.

In conclusion, my delegation will have the honour of participating in the 20 May celebrations, when we all celebrate Timorese independence. We will be sending a delegation to represent the Syrian Arab Republic on that historic occasion. Let us hope that God blesses the people of Timor and the Government of East Timor.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his clear and precise statement, which provided a perfect account of the superb work carried out by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) under the direction of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. We are sure that after independence, his successor — whom we know well, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma — will show himself to be equal to the task.

I should like to welcome President-elect Gusmão. We are deeply honoured that he has chosen New York for one of his first trips abroad. The independence of East Timor — so long awaited and so desired — will leave the Council with just one regret: that the future Ambassador of East Timor will replace the leaders of East Timor in the Chamber. However, the doors of the Council Chamber will always remain open to the East Timorese leaders. I would also like to welcome Mr. Mari Alkatiri. The presence side by side today of the President and the Chief Minister is the clearest proof of the balance of the East Timorese institutions.

The impeccable manner in which the presidential elections of 14 April were carried out, with a record rate of participation of more than 86 per cent, confirmed the great political maturity of the young Timorese democracy. The President and the Chief Minister will be able to tackle with confidence the great priorities of an independent East Timor: national reconciliation, the integration of the country into its regional and international environment, and economic development. I extend France's best wishes to them.

The Ambassador of Spain will later make a statement on behalf of the European Union. We fully associate ourselves with that statement. I will therefore limit my statement to a few comments.

First, on 20 May, East Timor will become independent. The United Nations will gain its 190th Member. What a long way we have come in two and a half years. The United Nations was able to adapt to the situation. The working groups in Dili and New York have done a good job. The recommendations of the Secretary-General now meet our expectations.

Secondly, a genuine exit strategy has been presented to the Council. It will make it possible to assist the new State effectively. All the elements are included: a specific timetable spanning two years, stages accompanied by measurable objectives, a division of competences between the United Nations Mission, the Bretton Woods system and the international financial institutions. Other actors who are not mentioned in the report can also make their contribution. I am thinking in particular of the regional organizations, the Association of South-East Asian Nations and the Asian Development Bank.

Thirdly, France will fully support the draft resolution containing all these elements, which the United Kingdom delegation announced it would soon submit. But we also expect that things will not end there. The Secretariat must continue to assess the situation periodically in order to make the necessary adjustments.

The next time the Council addresses the issue of East Timor, East Timor will be independent. We must work on this new success with the authorities of East Timor. The international community will see its role thoroughly transformed. Less than in the past will it be a task of substituting for the East Timorese authorities; rather, there will be a greater need to assist them. Other actors will also see their role grow. It would be useful to hold discussions on this with them. I propose that at our next discussion an invitation be extended to representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, the International Monetary Fund and the

World Bank to discuss the issue of East Timor, as we have done in the past.

Mr. Strømmen (Norway): At the outset I would like to thank the Secretary-General, President-elect Xanana Gusmão, Mr. Annabi and Mr. Alkatiri for their statements to the Council this morning. Allow me also to congratulate Mr. Gusmão on his election as the first President of an independent East Timor, as well as the East Timorese people and the United Nations for the excellent manner in which the presidential elections were carried out earlier this month. This is indeed a promising sign for the future of a democratic and stable East Timor.

Norway commends the Secretary-General for his report of 17 April 2002. It contains recommendations as to a clear and achievable mandate for the successor mission to United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), and it provides an exit strategy with benchmarks for the gradual downsizing of the mission. In our view, this is an outstanding example of mission planning. Moreover, the consultative planning process and the Integrated Mission Task Force have clearly contributed to the comprehensive nature of the recommendations, including the call for coordination to ensure a smooth transition towards a framework for medium- and long-term development assistance.

Norway supports the mandate, structure and overall timetable for the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) as set out in the Secretary General's report. We fully concur with the view that a peacekeeping presence is necessary until the national police and armed forces gain the capacity required to enforce the law and ensure internal and external security. At the same time, we are pleased with the report's indication that UNTAET's presence will be reduced from the current level and that the report offers a sensible schedule for reducing the international presence while transferring responsibilities to the East Timorese. Sustainable transition will require the effective Timorization of all public institutions.

Under the current circumstances the establishment of a well functioning public administration continues to be the greatest challenge for the United Nations in East Timor. This is also a key prerequisite for the new State's long-term stability. The proposed downscaling should therefore be undertaken on the basis of an in-depth assessment of the challenges faced by, and of the corresponding capacity within, the national administration. Needless to say, revisions should be made in close cooperation with the East Timorese authorities. Finally, the need to prioritize training of personnel to fill the large gaps in the staff of the administration is urgent and cannot be overemphasised.

Peaceful and constructive relations between East Timor and Indonesia are crucial for the stability and prosperity of the region. We are therefore pleased that bilateral relations between the two nations continue to improve. The bilateral meeting in February was a positive step in that regard. Notwithstanding this, there are still pending bilateral issues. We would here like to underscore the importance of the ongoing negotiations on judicial cooperation to permit the prosecution of alleged perpetrators of serious crimes committed in 1999. Another urgent matter is the completion of border demarcation and normalization in the border areas. We therefore welcome the recent launch of the border demarcation survey.

We share the Secretary-General's assessment that, in addition to the support provided by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the United Nations development agencies, bilateral development assistance will be crucial for the establishment of sustainable Government structures and institutions. My Government hosted the donors meeting for East Timor in December 2001. We now stand ready to fulfil our assurances of continued assistance, and we urge other countries to do the same. To facilitate future development cooperation, the Norwegian Minister for International Development, Ms. Hilde Johnson, intends to sign a memorandum of understanding during the donors conference to be held in Dili in May.

Justice, reconciliation and effective accountability are essential elements of East Timor's long-term stability. Norway attaches great importance to the work undertaken by the Serious Crimes Unit and the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation. Accordingly, my Government provides both human and financial resources to those institutions, and we support the Secretary-General's proposal to accord efforts within the justice sector high priority, including after independence. Nevertheless, the lack of qualified personnel continues to be a matter of concern. In that regard, we welcome the short-term measures undertaken by the Special Representative of

the Secretary-General to reduce the current backlog in the appeal court. In the longer run, however, the international community will need to work to support much-needed capacity-building in the justice sector.

I should like to conclude by congratulating Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello and by expressing Norway's appreciation for the outstanding way in which he has led the Mission since 1999. We would also like to welcome the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, and to wish him every success in his assignment. Finally, I should like to applaud the leadership and people of East Timor for the impressive progress achieved thus far and to assure them that my Government will continue to support their efforts to consolidate the foundations of a stable and fully functioning democratic State.

Mr. Fall (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): This meeting of the Council is taking place at a particularly important and encouraging time in the history of East Timor. My delegation welcomes in particular the presence of Mr. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão and Mr. Mari Alkatiri — President-elect and Chief Minister, respectively, of East Timor — and thanks them for their very encouraging statements on the positive development of the situation in their country.

Mr. Gusmão represents the conscience of a new East Timor, and that conscience is found in the words of wisdom that he expressed at the end of 1999:

> "I advocate dialogue, reconciliation and, once justice has been done, pardon. Ten years from now, we will be able to say: it is the past."

My country, Guinea, awaits with interest and enthusiasm the accession of East Timor to independence on 20 May 2002, which will also mark Mr. Gusmão's inauguration. My delegation is convinced that he will always remember the words that I have just cited. We wish him every success in the noble and delicate mission that awaits him, and we assure him of our support.

East Timor's independence will be a historic event and a great victory for the United Nations, whose contribution was crucial throughout the transition process. My delegation would like to pay a well-deserved tribute to all of those who have contributed enormous efforts to achieve that success. We are thinking in particular of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello as well as the entire staff of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), local elected officials and, above all, the people of East Timor. I should also like to congratulate our friend, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, for his nomination to the post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General. My delegation has no doubt that he will succeed in his efforts, given his outstanding qualities and his extensive experience.

The establishment of the Constituent Assembly, the adoption of the Constitution and the election of Mr. Gusmão, which mark the culmination of the efforts of the people of East Timor in their struggle for independence, represent a decisive stage in the peace process and in the democratization and reconstruction of the country.

My delegation welcomes the progress made in East Timor. However, in the context of the challenges that will have to be met to ensure a stable and prosperous East Timor, we should like to stress the following observations. Cooperation among the leading bodies should be encouraged. Support should be given to the actions of the Council of Ministers in the areas of justice, security, health, education, economic and social development and defence. Steps should be taken to avoid duplication between the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Reconciliation and Repatriation Liaison Team within the framework of refugee management. The various East Timorese, Indonesian and Australian parties, together with the United Nations, must continue dialogue on issues of common interest. We encourage them to shoulder their responsibilities with a view to facilitating the development of East Timor and to promoting security and stability in the region.

With regard to the socio-economic development of East Timor, my delegation believes that bilateral and multilateral assistance remains indispensable, with a particular emphasis on education and health. Furthermore, the dual objectives set out by the Planning Commission — encouraging strong economic growth and reducing poverty — should be supported.

In that regard, we hope that the donors meeting to be held in Dili on 14 and 15 May 2002 will represent an opportunity to respond positively to the financing of the national development plan, the medium-term fiscal framework and the annual budget for 2002-2003. Moreover, my delegation is convinced that the

international community will remain committed to East Timor after independence to consolidate the gains already made. In that regard, we encourage continued reflection by the New York and Dili planning teams, and we support the role of the United Nations as described in chapter III of the Secretary-General's report.

My delegation believes that all projects of the agencies and funds of the United Nations system should attach high priority to capacity-building, the development of human resources, the strengthening of institutions and the elaboration of consistent policies. However, we think that the development of the situation and experience in the field will enlighten us best as to possible additional action to be taken by the international community.

My delegation notes with interest that the continuation of United Nations action in East Timor will be possible only with adequate financial means. Therefore, we hope that the General Assembly will attach particular attention to this issue in examining both the proposal to end UNTAET and the proposed budget for UNMISET for the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003.

Finally, my delegation fully supports the relevant observations made by the Secretary-General in his report. In particular, we endorse the establishment of the successor mission for an initial period of 12 months.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to welcome the presence here today of Mr. Xanana Gusmão, President-elect of East Timor. I am pleased to extend our congratulations to him. In a few weeks, he will be sworn in as the President of East Timor. I am sure that he will continue to embody the lines of Horace: "To have begun is to be half done; dare to know. Start!"

I should also like to welcome the presence of Mr. Mari Alkatiri, Chief Minister of the Transitional Government and head of the majority in Parliament. We have learned a great deal from his important statement.

Our meeting today is historic in more ways than one. It provides us with an opportunity to demonstrate to international public opinion the Security Council's capacity to build and maintain peace and security. Launched in dramatic conditions on 15 September 1999, the actions of the Council and the United Nations in East Timor will enjoy a happy ending on 20 May with the advent of the independence of East Timor and the swearing-in of President Gusmão.

Today's success would not have been possible without the efficiency, dedication and tenacity of the civilian and military components of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Cameroon extends its heartfelt gratitude and sincere congratulations to them all.

I should like to take this opportunity to associate myself with the sincere tribute paid to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNTAET, for his work and outstanding success. I wish him much happiness and success in his new activities.

The results achieved in East Timor since 1999 and, in particular, over the past few months are most telling. They include a multilateral financial mobilization of well over $1 billion; peace in the territory; the relaunching of economic activity; the establishment of a Transitional Government; and, last but not least, the presidential election of 14 April. These are all historic milestones marking the emergence on the international stage of a new nation. All of these achievements must be consolidated. The fact that the Timorese are now masters of their own destiny should not lead the international community to abandon its role in assisting them.

The highly relevant paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report in document S/2002/80 says, in part, that:

> "the comparative fragility of the political foundations of this new country, its very limited pool of professional and administrative expertise, lack of strong independent security mechanisms and nascent state of economic development mean that East Timor will continue to require significant assistance from the international community well after independence, in order to ensure stability and realize the potential for progress that has been generated over the past two years."

The independence of East Timor, far from entailing an end to the United Nations commitment, marks instead the beginning of a new phase of significant and sustained assistance from the United

Nations in order to ensure that the results are preserved in the long term. That is why Cameroon thanks the Secretary-General for his statement and for the high quality of his report. The delegation of Cameroon fully endorses the creation of the new United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, including its financial implications, and supports the other recommendations contained in the report. It is gratifying that the United Nations will keep a mission in East Timor beyond 20 May.

I congratulate my friend and colleague Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma on his nomination by the Secretary-General to succeed Mr. Vieira de Mello. It is perfectly clear that Mr. Sharma, as a man of great experience, attentiveness and persuasiveness and therefore of great human value, will be able to provide the Timorese with all due support and to assist them in persuading the donor community — within which, fortunately, he has many friends — to continue, increase and strengthen its financial and technical assistance to that young country.

I hope that our friends from East Timor will continue to keep their country's noble mission in mind through the spirit of dialogue, openness, tolerance and joint management that they have clearly displayed in recent weeks, to the satisfaction of all. I wish them all the best.

In conclusion, I reiterate my country's great pleasure at seeing the approach of independence for East Timor on 20 May. That date is also Cameroon's national holiday. This year, our countries will be celebrating on 20 May; beginning in 2002, each year our countries will display their patriotic fervour on the same day. In anticipation of 20 May 2002, Cameroon — impatiently awaiting the reception of East Timor into the great family of nations — assures Mr. Gusmão of its resolve to enjoy relations of trust and close cooperation with his country.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation warmly welcomes President-elect Xanana Gusmão and Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri to New York to participate in our meeting today. We thank them for their statements.

We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing and introduction of the Secretary-General's report.

Like other colleagues, we warmly congratulate Mr. Gusmão on his election as the first President-elect of East Timor by an overwhelming majority in the balloting held on 14 April. The successful holding of the election was a landmark in East Timor's progress towards independence and a vivid demonstration of the fact that the East Timorese people have taken their destiny into their own hands. We wish the East Timorese people every success, under the leadership of Mr. Xanana Gusmão and the East Timorese Government, in overcoming the difficulties that lie ahead of them, so that newly born East Timor can embark on the path towards stability, democracy and sustainable development.

As a fledgling State, East Timor will face multiple challenges in terms of political, economic and social development for an extended period of time, even after its independence. It will require continued attention and assistance on the part of the international community. Therefore, the United Nations must maintain a certain level of presence in East Timor. This is now the common view of all members of the Council.

In light of the development of the East Timorese situation, the Secretary-General proposed the establishment of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) as the follow-up mechanism of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), and he has elaborated in detail on the scale of its mandate and its structure. He has put forward a mandate implementation plan and specifically identified three major tasks for UNMISET. He also sets out a very clear exit strategy for UNMISET. Emphasis is placed on enhancing East Timor's capacity-building, with a view to helping East Timor undertake, as soon as possible, nation-building in the areas of administration, justice and security. The ideas contained in the report of the Secretary-General are well thought out and meet the urgent needs of post-independence Timor. We agree with his proposal, and we hope that the Council will adopt a relevant draft resolution as soon as possible so as to ensure that UNMISET can carry out its work in a timely manner.

In discussing UNMISET's mandate, we would like to express our profound appreciation and gratitude to UNTAET for the outstanding contribution it has made to the independence of East Timor. We would especially like to thank Special Representative Vieira

de Mello for his outstanding leadership and tenacious spirit. The experience of peacekeeping and peace-building accumulated by UNTAET in East Timor will be a valuable asset for the United Nations. We welcome the new assignment of Ambassador Sharma, and we wish him success.

The Chinese people have always been friendly towards the East Timorese people. The high-level delegation headed by China's Foreign Minister, Tang Jiaxuan, will participate in East Timor's independence ceremony to share in the exuberance of the East Timorese people. China would like to establish and develop normal State-to-State relations with East Timor, on the basis of the principles of mutual respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence.

In the process of independence for East Timor, China has provided assistance, to the extent of its ability, including material donations and the training of administrative personnel. As pointed out in the Secretary-General's report it will still be essential for the international community to provide assistance to East Timor even after its independence. The Chinese Government will work in close coordination with the United Nations and, together with the rest of the international community, continue to work towards the social stability and economic development of East Timor.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): I would like first to thank the Secretary-General, President-elect Gusmão and Chief Minister Alkatiri for their important statements this morning. Ireland warmly congratulates the President-elect on his election. We also wish to congratulate the people of East Timor for the way in which they have taken ownership of democratic structures, substance and spirit.

I would also wish to join other colleagues in expressing warm thanks to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, for the very special work he is about to complete. We welcome the decision to appoint Ambassador Sharma as the next Special Representative for East Timor and look forward to working with him. Ireland is also grateful to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive introduction of the report of the Secretary-General this morning.

Ireland associates itself fully with the statement which will be delivered shortly by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

It is only a matter of weeks before East Timor becomes an independent State. This will be an occasion of real joy for the friends of East Timor around the world, including in my country. The principle of self-determination is one to which we attach great importance. This, combined with strong support in Ireland for the people of East Timor, has ensured that developments there have been followed closely in my country for many years.

The main task before us today is the consideration of the Secretary-General's recent report on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). In particular, we need to address the plan for the successor mission, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). My delegation welcomes the fact that the Secretary-General's approach to future United Nations involvement in East Timor remains fully consistent with the strong proposals he first outlined last October. We believe that the Secretary-General justifies these proposals well in his most recent report. We agree that the continued United Nations presence should be a robust one.

The report is clear in pointing out the very real needs of East Timor in the area of public administration, internal security and law enforcement, and external security and border control. There is an enormous capacity-building challenge — the construction of institutions of State from the very foundation up — which can be met only by strong and sustained international support.

In this respect, Ireland is generally content with the phased timetable of the United Nations follow-on operation. This is not the occasion to enter into detail. However, the timetable recognizes that there is still plenty of work to do, and we believe that it provides for measured assessments to be made along the way. We further believe that, in its approach to the United Nations post-independence presence, the Council should err on the side of caution and demonstrate generous amounts of patience.

The development of East Timor's relationship with Indonesia is of great importance to it, including to its economic well-being. We wish to see both countries working to improve links and to resolve outstanding

bilateral issues, including the delineation of the border and cooperation on bringing to justice those responsible for serious crimes. Ireland has welcomed the steps taken by the Government of Indonesia to bring to justice the perpetrators of gross human rights violations in East Timor. However, we can only echo the Secretary-General's regret that the jurisdiction of the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal has not been expanded to include several significant cases that occurred in 1999.

Also of great importance is the need for the East Timorese people to address the internal differences that peaked during the violence of September 1999. The establishment of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation is a very positive step in this regard, although it will require financial and personnel support if it is to have a substantial impact.

We are watching in great admiration as the people of East Timor progress towards independence. The latest report of the Secretary-General gives a strong sense of the real advances being made. It has to be borne in mind, though, that many hard tests lie ahead. East Timor is one of the least developed countries in the region. It needs support, as the President-elect and Chief Minister emphasized this morning, and it must receive that support.

In this regard, Ireland is one of those already involved in a range of development cooperation programmes in East Timor. This has been the case since 1999, and last year we opened a representative office in Dili. Our experience there has shown us that bilateral aid is crucial to the future development of East Timor. East Timor has already been identified by Ireland's development aid programme as a priority for reconstruction and rehabilitation activity. That cooperation aims to alleviate the material consequences of the recent conflict and contribute towards the immediate needs of political development and institutional capacity-building, while also helping to create the conditions for an appropriate longer-term engagement by Ireland Aid in East Timor.

As we move towards East Timor's independence, we should also dwell today, as others have, a little on the honourable role played by the United Nations. The exceptional work carried out by United Nations personnel before and since September 1999, together with the determination of the people of East Timor, have brought us to the point where the Secretary-General can now propose that we move to a new stage. Today is, therefore, also a time to pay warm tribute to all involved over the years in United Nations efforts.

I also want to express the gratitude of my authorities to the United Nations and Member States for the expressions of sympathy we have received following the recent death in East Timor of Private Peadar Ó Flatharta, a member of the Irish contingent of UNTAET. The tragic loss reminds us of the risks that United Nations peacekeepers assume in the service of the United Nations.

Ireland will continue its support for East Timor on a bilateral basis and through the multinational organizations of which we will soon both be members. Before then, though, we wish to reiterate our support for the Secretary-General's observations and recommendations for the United Nations continued engagement with East Timor. We believe and hope that the Council will do likewise. In doing so, we can allow the President-elect and the Chief Minister to leave here today with confidence that the international community will continue to stand by and support East Timor and her people.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I will not read my statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation. I hope that our East Timorese friends will understand me correctly. I fully associate myself with all the kind words addressed to them here, and with the words of gratitude to the Secretary-General, Hédi Annabi, Sergio Vieira de Mello and Kamalesh Sharma.

I also associate myself with the assessments contained in the Secretary-General's report, which the members of the Council have also expressed. We are ready to work actively on those recommendations in order to adopt the draft resolution on the new Mission so that the United Nations can continue to support East Timor following independence.

Given the lateness of the hour and commitments that I cannot cancel, I wish to propose the following. In the light of the requests made by some of the Council members on my list and in the light of the fact that His Excellency Xanana Gusmão must leave us very soon, I propose that he make a few comments in response. When he has finished, I will have to leave the Chamber. If the members of the Council agree, then Minister Konuzin can continue to chair the meeting until 1.30 p.m.

I call on the President-elect of East Timor, Mr. Gusmão.

Mr. Gusmão: On behalf of the people of East Timor, we would like to thank the members for their advice, recommendations and words of congratulations offered in their interventions.

I repeat to the members that our success is, and will be, their success. We will continue to rely heavily on the Council's support, and we assure it that in everything we are committed to doing our best in building the democratic State of East Timor. I thank the members of the Council very much for their support and kind words. Again, we will work together.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal): Let me start by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting and the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his very comprehensive and useful briefing.

The presidency of the European Union will make a statement after mine on the situation in East Timor. Allow me to add some remarks on behalf of my own country.

I would like to take advantage of this occasion to extend a very special greeting to President-elect Xanana Gusmão. We are used to seeing distinguished guests seated in those chairs, some of them historically important in the life of their countries. The members of the Council may understand how pleased I am, as a Portuguese ambassador, to have the opportunity to see here today the newly and democratically elected President of a territory which for a long time my country had wanted to see free and independent.

President Xanana Gusmão, as well as Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri, are the legitimate voices of a courageous people whom my Government wishes to praise and salute. Their visit to New York, on the eve of East Timor's independence, is a tribute to the United Nations contribution to their country's cause. It is also a fresh opportunity to hear their important reading of the current situation in the territory.

The next time the Security Council meets on East Timor, it will probably be to approve the mandate for a United Nations mission in the country after independence. We very much expect that this mandate will guarantee the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of the obligations created by the international community to the East Timorese situation.

Today seems like the right time to look back and to briefly evaluate the work the United Nations has done in East Timor to date, not to benefit history, but to draw some lessons for the future. I do not think I need to go into details, as most of the facts are well known to us all. Throughout recent years, the Secretary-General has presented a full account not only of United Nations efforts and achievements, but also of the steps necessary to guarantee a smooth transition to the independence of East Timor. The Timorese themselves have on several occasions contributed their own experience and expectations to this Council. We all recognize that East Timor is in a much better situation today than it was three years ago and that most of that improvement is due to United Nations efforts.

It is easy to read in the reports of the Secretary-General how many schools have been rebuilt, how many roads have been repaired, how many civil servants have been recruited, and to simply take that for granted. It is easy to look upon that lightly, without realizing how much it means to East Timor, how difficult it was to achieve and — I need to stress this — how complex it will be to sustain.

Calling the United Nations role in East Timor so far a success is already a platitude — a success that is not without flaws or gaps, but still an obvious success. We have always said that we should be careful not to create a future situation in which all these efforts might be jeopardized and wasted.

I want to take this occasion to reiterate once more Portugal's appreciation for the excellent work of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General throughout this entire process, from Ambassador Jamsheed Marker and Ian Martin, to Sergio Vieira de Mello. It was their dedication and skills which made it possible to carry out the United Nations mandate in East Timor. They did it at different times, but always under strenuous conditions.

The recent appointment of my colleague and friend, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the post-independence period gives me the guarantee that this work will be furthered with the same ability. The Secretary-General will have a distinguished and outstanding diplomat, a man of good will and exceptional experience, to represent him and to be the face and the voice of the international community in East Timor. We wish him all the best, and I want to assure him of our full cooperation in his very demanding task.

The case of East Timor has very painfully earned the international community's support. I am sure that the Council agrees with me that the Timorese have proved to us that that support was totally deserved. Anyone who has followed the process knows that we are in the presence of a people of incredible courage and tolerance, with leaders of remarkable vision and commitment.

I believe we can consider the democratic process in East Timor to be exemplary. The presidential election of 14 April was just one more instance of this. However, a new democracy is not merely a question of new institutions; it is also about the capacity to face internal political conflicts and disagreements and to wisely manage the difficult periods — despite the lack of resources and given the many expectations. It will require an adjustment in mentality and adequate material conditions on a sustained basis if it is to bear fruit.

Difficult to establish, a democracy is even more difficult to sustain and to strengthen. That is why we believe that the emerging institutions in East Timor, created under the responsibility of the United Nations, must continue to be protected and supported — not for too long, but for as long as is needed for us to be able to say that the work of the international community and its main organizations there is complete.

The United Nations, working with the international community, is responsible for keeping an adequate presence in East Timor and for supporting it after independence. Portugal welcomes the report of the Secretary-General and supports its recommendations for the establishment of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). I believe it is worth underlining the consistent manner in which this presence was planned. About a year ago, a concept was outlined and was subsequently developed into what we now have in front of us: a clear and reasonable road map for the two years ahead of us. We welcome the fact that this road map provides a milestone-based approach, focused on specific targets and on-the-ground assessments.

On security aspects, I would underline the need to develop and strengthen the East Timorese institutions. Well-trained police and defence forces that respect human rights and civilian supervision are a requirement not only for the sustainability of true independence but also for guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law. Since the United Nations police and military will have executive as well as training functions, it will be very important to clearly define arrangements guiding the relationship between them and the Timorese forces, namely, command and control mechanisms. We encourage the efforts under way to finalize these arrangements before independence.

The calm situation and the fact that there have been no recent security incidents related to militia activity from West Timor should not fool us into thinking that there are no risks at all to the security and stability of East Timor. We firmly believe that the current situation is the result of the presence of a robust United Nations peacekeeping force and the deterrent effect that it has had during almost three years of operation.

After 20 May, the international lights will start fading over East Timor. As soon as the situation in the new country becomes one of business as usual in the eyes of the international community, the Council — as is perfectly understandable — will be inclined to put East Timor into its archives. But what will happen if things go wrong, if the East Timorese leaders' efforts — even with the residual support of the international community — prove insufficient to tackle the actions of those who may be interested in disrupting normal life in the territory? How long will the Council take to re-engage by taking a concrete course of action to counter such acts? Why take that risk, given the immense financial and political cost for the future that it might entail? It would also risk the credibility that the United Nations has earned in recent years.

We are not asking the Council to consider creating a sort of dependent State — a permanently assisted administration. Very simply, we are asking for

the phasing-out of the military and security forces to be undertaken on the basis of a clear assessment of concrete risks, not on the basis of those that are surfacing under current circumstances. In particular, we consider that no final assessment should be made, with practical consequences for capacity on the ground, without taking into account the experience of the first months after the independence.

It is not my intention to try to invoke ghosts or to create artificial threats. By nature, we diplomats are interested in being professional optimists but we also want to have permanent reasons to remain such. That is why I want the Council to know that it is my Government's firm belief that there are important potential security risks that need to be taken fully into account, not only with regard to the external dimension but, increasingly, on the internal front.

I do not want to create alarm or sound gloomy, but I must call the attention of the Council to the potential threats that exist in Timorese society that will challenge the new Government very seriously. This is a society where opportunities for the new generation are still lacking, where important sectors of the former resistance and the former administration still tend to feel excluded from the new social, political and economic life, and where a possible new wave of refugees could trigger an immense social problem, with public-security implications.

In addition, the new Government will have to deal with the economic and social impact of the drawdown of the international community. Obviously, the international presence will have less and less weight in the local economy, and the Timorese will have to adapt their lives to this new reality. But it is essential to recognize that for the new Government this will represent considerable additional challenges. The extent of those challenges will not be fully known until some time after independence.

Regarding the civilian component of UNMISET, I would like to highlight once again the importance of including the Civilian Support Group in it. I do not need to repeat the fundamental importance we attach to these core functions in ensuring that the achievements of the public administration are not jeopardized. We also welcome the intention to include a human rights office, as well as a serious crimes unit, in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. In the past, I have spoken extensively in the Council about the fundamental importance of justice and the judicial system in East Timor, therefore, and I do not intend to take up more of the Council's time on this.

Before I conclude, I would like to express Portugal's appreciation for the work that the international financial institutions and the United Nations specialized agencies have accomplished to date in East Timor in their different areas of expertise. We believe that the joint efforts of these institutions, the Secretariat, non-governmental organizations and bilateral donors will be crucial not only for the successful accomplishment of the United Nations mandate but also for a smooth transition to a normal development framework. In this regard, we welcome the information in the Secretary-General's report about the mechanism set up for coordination among these different actors.

In less than a month East Timor will be independent. We will all be represented at the ceremonies in Dili to celebrate with the Timorese that important and historic moment. I believe that the Timorese will see that presence as a sign of the continued commitment and support of the international community, especially the United Nations, for the future of their territory and their country. Let us not disappoint them.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Spain. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey, Iceland and Liechtenstein align themselves with this statement.

I would first like to welcome the President-elect of East Timor, Mr. Xanana Gusmão, and the Chief Minister, Mr. Mari Alkatiri. Their presence in this chamber today demonstrates the democratic commitment of the East Timorese people and their remarkable achievements in moving towards independence and reconciliation.

We warmly congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for an outstanding record as head of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East

Timor (UNTAET), while trusting that his service to the United Nations will continue. The European Union also welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to appoint Mr. Kamalesh Sharma as his Special Representative for East Timor. We are confident that he will be an excellent head of the successor mission to UNTAET.

The European Union welcomes the peaceful elections of 14 April 2002, in which Mr. Gusmão was elected President by an overwhelming majority after a very good turnout. Once again, the East Timorese people have shown great political maturity, offering a perfect example of a country that has chosen democracy as the only way towards progress and well-being. We would like to thank the Independent Electoral Commission for organizing this successful election and to highlight the very important role played by its East Timorese staff.

We note with satisfaction the fact that President Xanana Gusmão has stated that his main goals will be national reconciliation, the establishment of international relations, political progress and economic development.

The European Union warmly welcomes the signing of the Constitution, which will come into force on the day of independence. We are sure that it will provide the basis for stability, democracy, freedom, justice and security for the East Timorese people.

During the celebrations planned to mark East Timor's independence, the member States of the European Union will be represented in a manner befitting the welcome due to a new nation that is joining the international community of States.

The European Union is strongly in favour of the United Nations having a role in peacekeeping and in supporting the authorities after independence, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report. Given that peace is the main precondition for the development of democracy in East Timor, it is essential that the peacekeeping force be phased out gradually, with due consideration to the security situation on the ground. We agree with the Secretary-General that the new United Nations Mission should provide stability and viability to the emerging East Timorese public Administration, assist in the development of law enforcement bodies operating in accordance with international human rights standards and contribute to the maintenance of external and internal security.

In this context, we commend the Secretary-General for his excellent report, which builds in a coherent manner on his earlier reports and gives a detailed description of the proposed United Nations successor Mission. The European Union supports the adoption by the Security Council of a draft resolution creating the new United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), as proposed by the Secretary-General.

Both the work of UNMISET and the future of East Timor will depend on the available resources. The European Union welcomes the proposal that the Civilian Support Group and the Serious Crimes Unit be included in the civilian component of UNMISET, and thus be financed through assessed contributions.

In only two and a half years, East Timor has gone from devastation to the establishment of the foundations for a new country and of the basic infrastructure for economic and social activity. Less than a month before independence, the new institutions are assuming a number of functions and responsibilities in areas such as public administration, security, and social and economic affairs. Still, they will require sustained support from the international community. The European Union and its member States are prepared to continue to assist East Timor on the path to sustainable development and urges the international community to support it.

Without internal and external security, East Timor will not succeed as an independent nation. The European Union understands the need to ensure that police and military institutions are adequately equipped and trained. We commend the work already achieved by the United Nations, in cooperation with certain donors, in the establishment of such institutions, and we take note of the Secretary-General's concern that additional training and donor support will be required after independence in order to guarantee that the security forces are fully operational by January 2004.

We note the report's positive stance with respect to the gradual diminution of militia activity, though this is a function of various factors such as a successful solution of the refugee problem, an agreement with Indonesia on the demarcation of the common border, and the success of the reconciliation and reintegration process.

After months of slow progress, recent refugee returns are encouraging. This reflects confidence in the present situation and optimism for the future. We hope that this trend will be consolidated. To this end, it is important that a prompt and fair solution be found to the problem of resettlement either in East Timor or Indonesia.

The European Union welcomes the efforts of the Government of Indonesia to resolve this question, namely its decision to pay the pensions of former civil servants, police officers and members of its armed forces in East Timor until Independence Day. We hope that those payments will commence before independence. We encourage Indonesia and the international community to continue to support the Consolidated Appeal for East Timor refugees.

The European Union urges Indonesia, together with East Timor, to resolve pending issues between the two countries, including judicial cooperation and a new border regime.

The European Union strongly encourages the future East Timorese Government to respect human rights and to continue to improve the human rights situation, as well as to ensure that all future legislation is consistent with international human rights standards. In this regard, we welcome efforts to strengthen the East Timorese judicial system, including the Serious Crimes Unit, so that justice and the rule of law can become a reality in East Timor.

We welcome the important steps taken by the Government of Indonesia to bring to justice the perpetrators of gross human rights violations in East Timor, but we share the Secretary-General's regret that the jurisdiction of the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal has not yet been expanded to cover all districts and the period from January to October 1999. The international community will continue closely to follow developments in this field in Indonesia.

As 20 May 2002 draws near, we are closer to welcoming East Timor as a new State Member of the United Nations. Three years ago, its name was synonymous with conflict and human suffering. This success is the fruit of courageous determination on the part of the East Timorese people, the generous commitment of the international community and the will to achieve peace through dialogue and reconciliation. Let us hope that this example is fully realized there and followed in other afflicted regions of the world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): My prepared remarks invite me, in my first paragraph, to acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. Mari Alkatiri, but unfortunately the arrangements today for non-members to speak do not allow me to commence my remarks in that way. I have to say that this is disappointing to my country, particularly given the contribution we have made in respect of East Timor, that we are getting what I regard as a less-than-appropriate opportunity to participate in the Security Council debate about East Timor. I am sorry to make that remark, but I do regret that the organization of Council business today has led to this result.

The successful presidential election in East Timor on 14 April was a major step in the final stages of East Timor's transition to independence. Our consideration of East Timor in the Security Council today, and the decisions to be taken by Council Members in the coming weeks, are further critical elements of this process. These decisions will have a direct and significant impact on the international community's continuing role in East Timor and on the long-term future of the new nation.

I thank the Secretary-General for his presence this morning, and I particularly thank my friend Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive briefing on the Secretary-General's report. The report shows how far East Timor's transition has come. While much remains to be done, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has built a sound foundation for an effective, viable and democratic independent nation. This is due in no small part to the enormously valuable and tireless contribution of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. I take this opportunity again to extend to him personally, and to all members of UNTAET, Australia's thanks for their dedication to laying the groundwork for the future independent East Timor.

Turning to the future, the Secretary-General's report underlines that at independence a number of critical elements of the new State of East Timor will

remain fragile. Without a continued international presence and commitment, the progress achieved so far will be at risk.

The Secretary-General has presented us with a comprehensive, practical and responsible plan for a United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) after independence. If it is carefully implemented, this plan, which Australia fully endorses, will provide the best possible chance for a stable, democratic and effective independent East Timor.

Australia supports the Secretary-General's recommendations for a successor Mission covering the four key components of peacekeeping, civilian police, a Civilian Support Group and an Office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, and funded from assessed contributions. We also support the Secretary-General's clear exit strategy, which envisages the progressive downsizing of all core components over a two-year period, against the achievement of clear milestones.

With regard to the security components of the new mission — and this is a point that I particularly wanted to stress today in, as I said, more comprehensive circumstances than the ones in which I find myself speaking — we appreciate the Secretary-General's advice that discussions are under way to finalize plans for command and control of the security forces in East Timor after independence. We strongly support the continued constructive work to develop, in as precise detail as possible, these arrangements. We also believe that it is critical to continued international confidence in East Timor that the arrangements operate in accordance with the standard United Nations procedures, and that the new Government approach this particularly sensitive area of administration in a highly cooperative spirit. If they do not do so, there is a significant risk that international support for the fledgling State will erode.

The successor mission in East Timor must not operate in isolation from the broader international effort to assist East Timor. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's description of the relationship between UNMISET, the wider United Nations system of agencies, funds and programmes, and the national development plan of the East Timor Government. This coordinated approach will lay the basis for East Timor's eventual transition to a normal development situation, with long-term needs assisted by United Nations agencies and other donor assistance.

Realization of that goal will depend not only on assessed funding for the duration of the successor mission, but also on sustained long-term support from the international community. For its part, Australia has made a significant contribution. In addition to our share of assessed contributions, we have spent $1.4 billion (Australian) on our military contribution from July 1999 to June 2001, and we have committed $150 million (Australian) for the four years from July 2000 to help with reconstruction and development in East Timor.

Continued international support will be critical to protect the considerable investments made so far and to promote East Timor's long-term development. In addition, as the Secretary-General has stated in his report, the achievement of key milestones during the coming two years will be greatly accelerated by strong donor support, particularly in the critical areas of establishing the border and customs service, resourcing and equipping of police and military institutions and the establishment of an adequate justice system. The more that international donors can support these key steps, the faster the successor Mission will be able to achieve its milestones, and the more efficiently the United Nations presence can be reduced. Australia will continue to do its part both through the United Nations and bilaterally, to support East Timor's transition and future development. We urge our fellow Member States to do likewise.

The Secretary-General's recommendations for UNMISET provide the details and strategic planning required to enable an effective transition from UNTAET to the post-independence period. We urge the Security Council to use this information to make sound decisions on a solid and comprehensive mandate for the successor mission that will guide East Timor through its first two years of independence.

We have in our grasp all the makings of a United Nations success story. The Security Council is in a position to maximize the chances for a stable and viable future for East Timor and its people. We must not let these opportunities pass us by.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to remind the Council that the formula that was chosen for the continuation of this meeting of the Security

Council was adopted at the insistent request of a number of delegations.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan, who will be the last speaker at this meeting. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): I, too, want to express my disappointment at the way this meeting was arranged. It is very disappointing that, although we are one of the major contributors, we have to speak in the absence of the future President and others. I hope you will consider this again, Mr. President, although I do not want to spend too much time on this.

First of all, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to congratulate Mr. Xanana Gusmão on his recent election as the first President of independent East Timor. I would also like to pay tribute to Mr. Mari Alkatiri, who has been serving as the Chief Minister of the Transitional Government of East Timor and who, with independence, will continue to assume important duties for nation-building in East Timor. Furthermore, I would like to extend once again our congratulations on the successful presidential election held in East Timor on 14 April. The international community, including the observation team dispatched by the Government of Japan, assessed the election as having been held in a free and fair manner. The success of the presidential election, following the Constituent Assembly elections held in August last year, is further testimony to the firm commitment of the people of East Timor to democracy.

In his congratulatory message to President-elect Gusmão, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi expressed the hope that Mr. Gusmão, in solidarity with the Government and people of East Timor, would tackle the tasks required to build a self-reliant nation. Prime Minister Koizumi also expressed the intention of the Government of Japan to continue to extend to East Timor as much support as possible.

This coming Monday, Prime Minister Koizumi will visit East Timor. That visit is aimed at conveying directly to the leaders and the people of East Timor the Japanese people's message of congratulations and their determination to assist East Timor. The Prime Minister is looking forward to meeting Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Alkatiri in Dili and to discussing with them the future of East Timor as well as the political stability and economic development of the Asia-Pacific region.

The Government of Japan has been making efforts to play a leading role within the international community in supporting East Timor. Indeed, it is already the largest donor in terms of actual disbursements. The Japanese Government has already extended $120 million for reconstruction and development as well as for humanitarian assistance on the basis of our pledge to provide, over three years, $130 million to this end — a pledge we made at the first donor conference we hosted in Tokyo in December 1999.

In addition, an engineering group of 680 troops, including female members of Japan's Self-Defence Forces, has completed its deployment in East Timor this month to participate in the United Nations peacekeeping operations. They will engage in the construction and repair of roads and bridges, which are also expected to contribute to the reconstruction and development of East Timor.

What the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has achieved in East Timor is a success story of which the United Nations should be proud. We cannot overemphasize the important role UNTAET has played over the past two and a half years in assisting East Timor's progress towards independence. I would therefore like to express the Japanese Government's admiration and appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, and to the other members of UNTAET for their leadership and dedicated efforts throughout this period.

I also welcome the report on East Timor which Secretary-General Kofi Annan submitted to the Security Council on 17 April. The Government of Japan supports the plan described in the report concerning the mandate, structure and timetable of a United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). The Japanese Government also supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the Security Council adopt a resolution giving a mandate to UNMISET for its initial period of one year.

It is clear to everyone that after independence East Timor will face a number of difficult challenges. With this recognition, I would like to point out that it is important for the leadership of East Timor to lead their country in solidarity; that it is important for the people of East Timor to participate in the efforts for nation-building, taking on their country's development as a

matter of their own responsibility; and that it is important for the international community to continue its support for East Timor. I would like to emphasize in particular that the support of the international community and the development of good cooperative relations between East Timor and neighbouring countries are indispensable for the stability and prosperity of East Timor.

The Government of Japan, for its part, is determined to spare no effort to continue to play an important role in the international efforts to support East Timor.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are speakers remaining on my list. With the agreement of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting. The date of its resumption will be announced in the Journal.

The meeting was suspended at 1.35 p.m.